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कृपया पुस्तक के ऊपर कोई निशान आदि
न लगायें।

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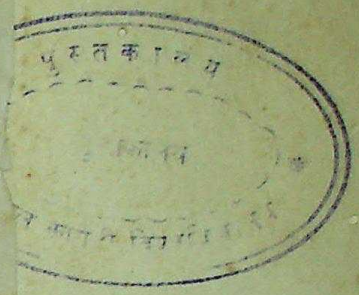

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अतुलितबलधामं हेमशैलाभदेहं
दनुजवनकृशानुं ज्ञानिनामग्रगण्यम् ।
सकलगुणनिधानं वानराणामधीशं
रघुपतिप्रियभक्तं वातजातं नमामि ॥

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Preface

While the philosophical systems or religious cults of ancient India have received some attention from historians and Indologists, the development of religious feelings and sentiments in the context of the diverse doctrinal and cultural factors influencing and shaping them, has attracted relatively little historical attention. It is not too difficult to describe dogma and ritual in their systematic or crystallized form; to connect them with the foundational religious experience and feeling from which they spring and which, in turn, they seek to determine, is an exceedingly complex task. We have, thus, the curious situation that while several monographs have been published on the development of Buddhist or Vedantic systems or the Vaiṣṇava or Śaiva cults, the development of religious feeling as an inalienable aspect of the human heart underlying all these various facets of thought and tradition still remains a subject of considerable obscurity. In fact, it is a widely current notion that ancient Indian religion fell between the two stools of impersonalistic intellectualism on the one hand and the superstitious ritualism and mythology of polytheistic cults on the other. It has even been held that the development of the true religion of the heart, of bhakti, really belongs to medieval India, presumably owing its efflorescence to the fertilizing influences of Islam, if not Christianity.

The present work seeks to establish on the basis of a detailed analysis of the original literature that the true sentiment of bhakti may be traced back to Vedic times and seeks to elucidate the various stages through which it developed and reached its complete maturity in the *Bhāgavata*. It analyzes the obstacles and challenges which stood in the way of this development, whether in the shape of Mīmāmsā Formalism, or Vedantic Gnosticism or Buddhist Impersonalism, and also how these were overcome through the evolving notion of a personal Godhead and its involvement in the history of humanity especially in terms of the doctrine of Incarnation. So powerful was this notion of a personal deity deigning to assume a human form, that Sānkhya and Mīmāmsā, Vaiśeṣika and Vedānta, all tended to move in a visibly theistic direction and even Buddhism and Jainism remained atheistic more in abstract theory than in concrete practice. The present work thus includes the analysis and interpretation of doctrines as well as cult practices but it essays to go beyond these to discover the subterranean stream of the experience and feeling of bhakti which gradually came to the surface and finally swept away every obstacle as a mighty river.

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The first chapter seeks to analyse the notion of bhakti as formulated in theoretical works of the age of maturity so that one may be left in no doubt about the nature of the phenomenon of which the earlier development needs to be traced. This chapter also seeks to connect the doctrines of *Bhaktiśāstra* with alternative metaphysical formulations and brings out as it were an ideal mapping of the developmental process involved.

The second chapter essays to bring out the essentially personal character of early Vedic gods despite their invocation and description in terms of natural forms. Although Vedic gods have a superhuman and cosmic aspect and are an altogether different 'race' than that of mortals, nevertheless they are capable of entering into a *personal relationship* with their worshippers, a relationship which is one of feeling, not ritual. The latter day traditional ritualistic interpretation of Vedic gods is as onesided as several modern interpretative essays in terms of primitive animism, fertility religion, superstitious polytheism or the so-called Henotheism. Later Vedic religion gave rise along with ritualistic elaboration and transcendental monism to symbolic meditations and the search for the person or spirit within man as well as the cosmos and clearly described the notions of Grace, Love and Ecstasy.

The third chapter argues that the epics clearly move towards bridging the gulf between man and deity. In the *Rāmāyaṇa* it is not correct to argue that a purely human Rāma and his story were later on overlaid by an adventitious deification. From the very beginning the idealization and glorification of the legendary figure of Rāma led naturally to his deification and it must be remembered that in archaic thought the heroic was semi-divine, distinguished only by mortality. The archaic notion of 'hero', thus, was a natural stepping stone towards the notion of Incarnation. In the *Mahābhārata* the doctrine of Bhāgavatism is adumbrated along with a characterization of Kṣṇa which has been much misunderstood but which really makes the doctrine come alive. Several historical problems connected with the interpretation of the epics are also analyzed here. Here, again, it is not correct to stress the so-called contradiction between the 'tragic heroic' epic and the ethico-religious epic as traditionally understood because of the doctrine and character of Kṛṣṇa. The intervention of Kṛṣṇa and his doctrine of *karman* unite the *raudra-karuṇa* aspect of the epic as merely a moment in its final aspect of *vīra* and *śānta rasas* as traditionally understood.

The fourth chapter deals with the *Gītā* where the religion of bhakti finds its first classical exposition in the context of doctrinal controversy and attempted synthesis. Brahmanism and Śramaṇism, *karman* and *jñāna*, become here but alternative moments in the pilgrimage towards the goal of bhakti or Love of God. The passions and sufferings of life, as in the epic tale, can be transmuted only by the alchemy of surrendering to the will of God. Some of the most important modern and ancient interpretations of the *Gītā* are discussed in this context and evaluated.

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The fifth chapter attempts to show that despite its metaphysical tendencies of atheism, impersonalism, ascetic negativism and transcendentalism, Buddhism provided a place for the development of bhakti on account of its Buddhology which in many respects came to resemble the commonly current modes of theistic worship. If the doctrines of Emanation and Incarnation had sought to humanize the Divine, Buddhology propounded the veritable perfection of man into a being constituted by Enlightenment and far above all the gods, not a creator of this 'vale of tears' but a compassionate Guide for all beings, the source of supreme spiritual grace.

The sixth chapter traces the evolution of Pāñcarātra doctrines from their obscure origins in hero worship, through the transforming influence of the worship of a gentler god through non-ritualistic means and the perspective of the theory of Emanation. The original *saṁhitās* of the Pāñcarātra school are analyzed *in extenso* and their continuity with Puraṇic and Āgamic literature exhibited. It may be particularly mentioned that following Schrader's brief monograph very little work has so far been done on the *Pāñcarāta Saṁhitās* and practically none with respect to their contribution to the development of *bhakti*.

The seventh chapter analyzes the role of the Tamil saints in the evolution of bhakti. Contrary to an opinion sometimes expressed or implied, the Tamil saints did not originate bhakti in any sense, neither in doctrine nor in sentiment. They presuppose myth, symbol and doctrine as already available in the Āgamic literature and earlier tradition. Their real contribution lay in their popularization of bhakti through personal example and the creation of a marvellous poetry which has never ceased to move the hearts of the people. In this they furnish a parallel to the medieval saints.

The eighth chapter analyzes the place of bhakti in the *Purāṇas* and argues that the *Bhāgavata* constitutes its culminating expression and was the gateway from which issued the medieval throngs of singers of the love of God. If the *Gītā* had recapitulated the theistic quintessence of Vedic literature and synthesized it with what was offered by the Sramaṇic challenge and thus formulated bhakti as the supreme mode of approaching God, the *Bhāgavata* made the synthesis more comprehensive in a context of more developed systems and sects and at the same time carried forward the exposition of the idea of bhakti as ultimately that of a process of an all-consuming and exquisitly delectable love resting on the contemplation, remembrance and vision of the Lord's *līlā*. *Bhakti* as *rasa* is firmly established in the *Bhāgavata* not only as a doctrine but as glowing poetry. The *Bhāgavata* is both *Śāstra* and *Kāvya*. It combines the precision and authority of the former with the emotional intensity of the devotional songs of the south, and it surpasses both.

The ninth chapter argues that it is not correct to believe that the austere monism of Śaṅkara is totally hostile to bhakti though Rāmānuja undoubtedly provides a more congenial mataphysic.

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The tenth chapter discusses the complex inter-relationship of the growth of bhakti and of art. Bhakti gradually transformed ancient art providing it with theme, motif and feeling. At the same time art provided bhakti with a visible and plastic expression which made it available as an inspiration even to the lowliest in the populace. Iconoclastic forms served at once as symbols as well as evocations.

The thesis as a whole seeks to thread its way through a maze of intricate data and controversies intent on critically reconstructing the progress of a sentiment in the constantly changing context of doctrines, practices, institutions and symbols. In particular, it stresses the nuances of ideas and their relationship to the nuances of feeling. This approach not unoften leads to analysis at a relatively abstract level. I can only hope that this essay in the history of ideas and religious sentiments will be a humble footnote towards the understanding of the still obscure processes of ancient Indian religion, culture and thought from a historical angle.

The present work is substantially identical with my thesis "The Development of Bhakti in Ancient India" on which the degree of Ph.D. was awarded by the Universty of Panjab, Chandigarh in 1979. My greatest debt obviously to my supervisor, Prof. V.C. Pandey, Head of the Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, University of Panjab, Chandigarh, who was a constant source of help. I must also thank some of my friends and teachers, especially Dr. Neelima Vashishtha and Dr. G.S.P. Misra who have helped me in various ways. I am also thankful to the librarians of the universities of Panjab, Delhi and Rajasthan for helping me with books and journals even by procuring them from distant libraries.

I do not know how to thank Papa, Prof. G.C. Pande, whose academic guidance is reflected in every chapter of this book.

I am extremely thankful to the office-bearers of the Indian History & Culture Society, particularly Dr. S.P. Gupta, who have sponsored the publication of this book. I am equally beholden to Shri S. Ganesh Rao of the Archaeological Survey of India for making it press ready and seeing its proof. I would be failing in my duty if I do not thank the officers of the Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi, for arranging financial grant for its publication. I am sincerely thankful to Shri Inder M. Sharma of the Books & Books, New Delhi for taking great pains in seeing it through the press on behalf of the Society.

There were times when my spirits sagged: at such moments my husband, Shri V.K. Pande, cheered me up with words of encouragement. The part played by my daughter Shrijani is no less important. To both of them my thanks are due in no small measure.

Before closing I would like most humbly to request my readers to be indulgent : '*Nātrātīva Kartavyaṁ doṣa-dṛṣṭiparam manaḥ*'.

Bhopal
February 1, 1982

Susmita Pande

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Abbreviation

Books

Rg.	*Ṛgveda.*
Up.	*Upaniṣad.*
MBH.	*Mahābhārata.*

Journals

ABORI	*Annals of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.*
BV	*Bharatiya Vidya.*
EI	*Epigraphia Indica.*
IHQ	*Indian Historical Quarterly.*
JBBRAS	*Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.*
JBORS	*Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society.*
JISOA	*Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art.*
JSVOI	*Journal of Sri Venakatesvara Oriental Institute.*
JRAS	*Journal of Royal Asiatic Society.*
JUPHS	*Journal of the Uttar Pradesh Historical Society.*
NIA	*New Indian Antiquary.*
PSOC	*Proceedings of the Second Oriental Conference, Calcutta.*
PIHC	*Proceedings of the Indian History Congress.*
PAIOC	*Proceedings of All India Oriental Conference.*
TAS	*Tamilean Antiquary Society, Series 2.*
ZDMG	*Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft.*

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1

The Idea of Bhakti

BHAKTI movement is commonly considered as a medieval phenomenon. It is true that during the middle ages scholastic theory of bhakti received an elaborate expression at the hands of some philosophers and that a large number of saints preached the doctrine of bhakti, practically in all parts of India. Nevertheless, its doctrine as well as its practice can be traced back to remote antiquity, and, in fact, medieval thinkers themselves constantly appealed to these ancient sources. We have thus a phenomenon of true historical development in the realm of bhakti which manifested itself as early as the Vedic hymns, but gradually developed through the ages till, in medieval times, it reached its climax.

The process of its development can be properly understood only if we keep in mind the *telos* or end towards which that process tends.[1] It is true that historical development is never wholly rational or organic,[2] so that we can hardly think of any perfect ends in the context of such a process. Nevertheless, there is an undeniable logic of development within the ideal processes of cultural history. It must at least be admitted that in the realm of the history of ideas such a process is more important than elsewhere. In a broad sense the history of ideas does exhibit a process of development which at least seeks to be rational.

From this point of view it would be helpful if we begin by examining the nature of bhakti as understood in classical medieval works which came at the end of a long development which they illumine.

Bhakti is both a means as well as an end in spiritual life. Bhakti as a means is called *sādhana bhakti* or *gauṇī bhakti* or *aparā bhakti*.[3] The root *bhaj*, in the sense of serving (*sevana*), gives the clue to the meaning of this bhakti. It is serving or worshipping the divine, generally with the help of names and forms. It may be either ritualistic (*vaidhī*) or emotional (*rāgātmikā*).[4] It implies a certain code of conduct (*ācāra*) and worship (*upāsanā*, *pūja*). As a result of this, the heart of the devotee is gradually purified, the force of past sins worked out, diminished or cancelled, the cloud of ignorance gradually lifted. The devotee sees what now directly he formerly held on faith. The object of worship remains no longer veiled behind a symbol, but is directly and intimately experienced. This is *parā bhakti*

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and develops in several stages. Egoism and passions having been discarded, the purified and enlightened mind of the devotee experiences a growing love of God and directly perceives His response or *līlā*. He is now immersed in the enjoyment of *līlā-rasa*.[5] Bhakti, as a means, then, is the same as worship of a personal deity, while Bhakti, as an end, is the loving communion with the divine person.

The two senses of the root *bhaj*—serving and sharing—correspond to the two stages of the devolpment of bhakti. In the first stage the object of worship is not directly perceived, the devotee's heart is still not purified of egoism (*ahaṁkāra*) and passions (*viṣaya-vāsanā*). Worship at this stage is essentially an expression of faith, a resolute turning of the will towards God and the determination to serve Him with all one's faculties. In the final stage the devotee shares in Life Divine (*līlā*).

In every case bhakti implies the sense of a personal relationship with God. It implies the conception of the deity as a person with whom man can enter into a relationship that can be felt. It implies, thus, the notion of the deity as person on one hand and of man as person on the other. A person is a spiritual or a self-conscious being. In a certain sense the development of the doctrine of bhakti implies the doctrine of an essential kinship between man and God. Again, since the nature of bhakti is love, the development of bhakti also implies the growth of the conception of love and of the discovery and formalization of the modes of symbolic and actual behaviour appropriate to the cultivation and expression of love.[6]

The structure of bhakti is, thus, at once theoretical, emotional and practical. It is a unity of-knowing, feeling and willing in a growing integral being which culminates in direct communion with the divine. On the theoretical side it implies a conception of the personal nature and kinship of God and man. On the emotional side it implies the awareness of diverse personal relationships, modes and sentiments, appropriate to the kinship between man and God. On the practical side it implies forms of worship and of moral and social conduct which would express the ideal of the devotee and correspond to the stage of his progress.

It is true that the best known medieval schools of bhakti tend to be monotheistic, but not monistic. They seem to think that there is one supreme divine person whom the human soul, as a finite spiritual being, eternally seeks. So long as the human soul does not realize its true spiritual nature, it wanders unhappy from birth to birth. The grace of God awakens the soul to its spiritual nature, and with that inevitably comes the longing for the infinite spirit, which is the same as bhakti. From this point of view polytheism and absolutistic monism appear to be as much contrary to bhakti as any variety of naturalism; the former robs the Divine of His supreme and unique position and, in its lower forms, even of His character as supernatural person (*puruṣottama*) : the latter by abandoning the finitude of human, soul, abolishes the distinction between man and God. In any variety of naturalism

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man ceases to have an eternal and spiritual nature, so that love itself becomes a temporary relationship based on needs and adorned by fancy. Those philosophies, even those dualistic ones like Sānkhya, Nyāya and Jainism which concede plurality as well as the spirituality of human nature, but which deny to the human spirit, the self-consciousness of its limitations and dependence and with it the possibility of longing and feeling, are thus contrary to bhakti, because they abolish the possibility of love as central to human nature. The doctrine of bhakti has had to contend with these two extremes of naturalism and polytheism tending towards the quenching of Love in worldly pursuits on the one hand and of monistic and pluralistic intellectualism on the other. The former tendencies seek to gratify natural impulses and desires (*kāma bhoga*). They take human nature to be identical with the sense-bound ego. The latter alternative tends to extol a mere negation and identify man's destiny with ultimate dispassion (*para vairāgya*).

Even so it has to be admitted that serious and valiant attempts have been made to reconcile advaita with bhakti. Of these the attempt of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī must be deemed to have finally ended the controversy, though the writings of the Kashmir Śaivas, especially Abhinavagupta as well as of the advaitic Śāktas undoubtedly contain the reconciliation of advaita and bhakti. From the advaitic point of view the search of the individual for the divine is part of the same *līlā* which has created the sense of an individual separate from God. To deny feeling and action in the absolute does not imply any deficiency in the absolute. It is only a part of an attempt to express the infinite nature of the absolute where all attributes get denied. Such denials do not limit the absolute, because the absolute is not a negative entity. The absolute is the most positive, the fullest, where all known attributes are perfected and surpassed. The tendency to affirm merely being or being and conscious or being, consciousness and bliss of the absolute has meaning only in terms of either the negation of some complementary negation, or of a suggestive analogy. When Brahman is called *sat*, *asat* is negated and the perfection of being is attributed to Him. It is the same with all other attributes. Since the most intimate character of the absolute is discovered in the ātman. It is difficult to see in which sense the advaitic Brahman is impersonal. Certainly the Brahman is not a man, nor does it have the attributes of human mind in its limitations and imperfections. It must, however, contain the essential being and value of human nature which is self-awareness. As the Upaniṣad says, the notion of the self is the source of all values and seekings.[7] Love itself has the self for its object which is seen in another as through a veil. As Vidyaranya says, in all seekings, man merely seeks the self.[8] In all experiences of values man experiences the self. At the empirical level, the true object of seeking an experience is veiled by finite natural forms. Spiritual life begins when one cleaves to the infinite essence underlying all finite manifestations. Advaitic knowledge, thus, far from impoverishing the love and longing for an infinite self consciousness or person, is the essential condition for such a quest to be truly and fruitfully pursued. If God is really other than man,

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their kinship can only be accidental and will ever remain in jeopardy. If, on the other hand, man essentially needs God and can be with Him eternally, can he be really different from Him?

Thus, the stream of bhakti has developed from within the matrix of early Vedic religion, gradually perfecting its notions of God and man and of ritual and conduct appropriate to their relationships. It has contended with diverse contrary tendencies, among which may be counted early Buddhism and Jainism, Sāṅkhya and Yoga, Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika, Mīmāṁsā and Cārvāka. Its relationship with Vedānta and Tantra has been close and complex. The early Vedic hymns reveal a lofty conception of divine reality, and, not unoften, establish a personal relationship between man and deity. From the point of view of bhakti, the tendency towards excessive formalization of ritual, which grew up in the middle Vedic period, was a hindrance. It seemed to convert worship into magic and commerce. The Upaniṣads, with their clear insight into the unity of all the Gods and their doctrine of the universal spirit (ātman) or person (puruṣa), furnished the basic track along which bhakti was to grow. In fact, the *Kaṭha* and *Śvetāśvatara* Upaniṣads contain clear enunciation of the doctrine of bhakti which is implied in many other Upaniṣads such as *Īśa*, *Chāndogya*, etc.[9] Here are already adumbrated the doctrines of grace, love and beatitude following a life of discipline, discernment and contemplation. The Upaniṣads clearly visualize the mystical way—purgative, illuminative and unitive. Behind this conception of the spiritual quest lies the conception of the absoluteness and supremacy of the spiritual principle in man which is identified with the cosmic divine reality.

While the Upaniṣads view the essence of man as divine, they tend to take a transcendental view of the spiritual essence which equally underlies man as well as nature. The gap of between man and gods is still continued in the sense that man is required to transcend his merely human or psycho-physical personality to realize his essential element. It is in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that the next step is taken with the doctrine of incarnation according to which God himself is born in man. Humanity now becomes the supreme manifestation of divine nature. Arjuna indeed prefers the human form of Kṛṣṇa to his cosmic form. Kṛṣṇa himself declares the unmanifest absolute as inaccessible to man. The Upaniṣadic ascent towards God is now matched by the descent of God among men. With this humanization of God, bhakti came into its own as love within a personal relationship between man and God serving as the very archetype of love among men.

This new development took place among the Kṣatriya clan to which Kṛṣṇa belonged. In this clan at the same time the idea of the worship of some of its famous heroes (*vṛṣṇi vīra*) was also current. An attempt was made to link the doctrine of incarnation with this doctrine of royal hero worship through the concept of emanation (*vyūha*). The other worshipful heroes were joined to Kṛṣṇa as so many emanations of the Divine reality. This doctrine of the *vyūhas* along with a new interpretation of ritual constituted the heart of the *Pāñcarātra* movement which, in course of time, used its own elaborate *Saṁhitās*.

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The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* already contains the basic outlook of the Śaiva cult for which Śiva is the Lord and the human soul utterly dependent on Him. Corresponding to the *Bhāgavata* concept of *puruṣottama*, we have here the concept of Paśupati. The Pāśupata cult, so called, found a historical landmark when it was claimed that the Lord had descended (*avarohaṇa*) to assume a human body as Lakulīśa. For the *Bhāgavata*(*s*) God is born as man. For the Śaivas or Pāśupatas Śiva appears in the human birth as a perfect Being (*siddha*).

During the Śaka-Kuṣāṇa age the *Bhāgavata* and *Pāśupata* attempts to bring humanity and divinity together were matched by Mahāyāna Buddhism, where the *bodhisattva*, especially *bodhisattva* Avalokiteśvara, is hard to distinguish from a gracious god, easily accessible to man. The *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka* goes on to place the highest emphasis on repeating the name of Avalokiteśvara and calling on him for help and guidance. The notion of the Buddha as a supernatural person manifesting himself in human form was elaborated into the doctrine of the three Bodies (*trikāya*) and also helped the rise of the Buddha image for worship. That, along with the new practice of the *deva-kula*(*s*) and the popular emphasis of paurāṇika Hinduism helped the rise of temple worship as a major feature among all the religious cults of India in the Gupta and the post-Gupta times.

The Purāṇas, which were originally bardic compilations, were recast in the Kuṣāṇa and Gupta periods as veritable popular expositions seeking to present a syncretic and theistic religion. The doctrine of *Trimūrti* was one of their greatest triumphs and the idea of incarnation was taken up and further developed. New forms and symbols were provided for older Vedic ideals.

It was in the south under the Pallavas where Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism contended as rivals that the Āḷvārs lent a new dimension to bhakti by making it an intensely personal and popular appeal, which disregarded hierarchical and formal tradition. This work forms the basis of discussion and systematization by series of learned philosophers (*ācāryas*).

All these diverse tendencies were summed up in the *Bhāgavata* which became the central point of reference for the later bhakti movement. It may be regarded as the gateway to medieval bhakti. While Ramanuja thinks of bhakti as 'constant remembrance' of the Lord and as *śaraṅaṇāgati*[10], the *Bhāgavata* defines bhakti as the 'uninterrupted flow' of the mind towards the Lord or as love for Him, as importunate and obstinate as natural love. The views of the *Gītā*, the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and of the *Rasa-śāstra* were taken up into a perfected system of the philosophy of bhakti by men like Madhusūdana Sarasvatī and the Gosvāmīs.

REFERENCES

1. Cf. Ross, *Aristotle*, p. 45.
2. Cf. Fisher, *History of Europe*, Preface, p.v.

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3. *Nārada-bhakti-sūtra, sūtra* 56:
"*Gauṇī tridhā guṇa-bhedād ārtibhedād vā*".
This obviously derives from the *Gītā*:
"*Caturvidhā bhajante mām*", etc. 7. 16;
Cowell, *Aphorisms of Sāṇḍilya with the Commentary of Svapneśvara* pp. 75-76;
Madhusudana, *Bhagavadbhaktirasāyana*, pp. 21 ff.
The dates of the Bhakti-sūtras of Nārada and Śāṇḍilya are quite uncertain; of the two, Śāṇḍilya is presumably earlier stylistically. Cowell calls Sāṇḍilya comparatively modern (op. cit., p. ix). The crucial question is whether Nārada and Śāṇḍilya are earlier than the *Bhāgavata* or later. They are best regarded as attempts at producing aphoristic compendia of the *Bhāgavata*, cf. Dhavamony, *Love of God*, p. 84. Were they older than the *Bhāgavata* they would surely have been referred to by classical writers and would have been quoted as authorities by the medieval theorists of bhakti.
4. "*Vaidhī rāgānugā ceti sā dvidhā sādhanābhidhā*"—Rūpagosvāmi, *Haribhakti-rasāmṛtasindhu, Pūrvabhāga*, 2nd *Laharī*, 3.
5. Cf. *Bhagavadbhaktirasāyana*, 1, 10; 3rd *Ullāsa* on the nature of *rasa*.
6. *Nārada-bhakti-sūtra*, 4th chapter, sūtras 51-56. The nature of love is here described as ineffable (*anirvacanīya*) like a dumb person's taste of delight (*mūkāsvādanavat*). Love is described as a subtle experience, continuous, growing selfless and motiveless (*Guṇa-rahitaṁ kāmanā-rahitam-pratiksana-Vardhamānaṁ avicchinnaṁ sūkṣamtaraṁ anubhavarūpaṁ*) : Cowell, op. cit., pp. 7-9.
Rūpagosvāmi defines love as intense feelling of personal relationship overwhelming the mind and leading to its spontaneous outflow of tenderness:
"*Samyaṅ masṛṇita svānto mamatvātiśayāṅkitaḥ*
Bhāvah sa eva sāndrātmā budhaiḥ premā nigadyate", op. cit. p. 115.
7. *Ātmanastu Kāmāya sarvaṁ priyaṁ bhavati*". *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.*, op. cit., II. 4,5, (tr. Madhavanand, Almora), p. 354.
8. *Pañcadaśī*, chap. 15.
9. *Śvetāśvatara* mentions the word *bhakti*—'*Yasva deve parā bhaktiḥ.....*" cf. *Śvetāśvatra Up.*, VI. 23.
10. "*Śaraṇāgatigadyaṁ*". cf. Commentary on *Gītā*, 18, tr. K. Bhashyam.

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2

Bhakti in the Vedas and Upanisads

The traditional interpretation of the evolution of Vedic literature in terms of *Karma-kāṇḍa* and *Jñāna-kāṇḍa*[1] is inadequate and misleading. Such an account tends to schematically simplify matters. It is hardly correct to say that the Vedic hymns were originally essentially ritualistic and further it does not seem correct to say that the Upaniṣads follow only an intellectual path. Actually, the hymns as well as the Upaniṣads contain the elements of a many-sided religion. This would emerge clearly if we examine the concept of *devatā* which is central to early Vedic religion.

Concept of Devata

As the Vedic religion is concerned with the worship of *devatā* let us first consider the concept of *devatā*. It is sometimes said that the early Vedic religion is animistic, rooted in ignorance, fear and greed[2] and this interpretation does not give much scope to bhakti in the Vedic hymns. According to it, the devas are anthropomorphized versions of natural phenomena. Actually, if considered carefully, the the devas would be seen as beneficient and luminous powers of Light. The word deva itself has the sense of bright'.[3]

All the gods are beneficient powers. Human beings pray to them for light and life and for various worldly things.[4] The gods are the source of *Ṛta* and themselves rooted in *Ṛta*[5] which is connected with all the gods and all the legends of the *Veda*. Agni extends over earth and heaven by *Ṛta*,[6] is the first born of *Ṛta*,[7] is the summoner of *Ṛta*,[8] cuts many streams of *Ṛta*, so that they may flow to man,[9] and is the bull of *Ṛta*.[10] *Mitrā-Varuṇā*, the twin gods, fill *Ṛta* and *Ṛta* always cleaves to them. They trust down falsehood and are always in contact with 'the truth'. They illuminate the human consciousness by the Light, by *Ṛta*.[11] *Uṣas* moves following the path of *Ṛta*.[12] Indra is intoxicated on the path of *Ṛta*.[13] Aditi possesses *Ṛta*.[14] Bṛhaspati founds the plane of illumination by giving voice to *Ṛta*,[15] Viśvedevas are in touch with *Ṛta*.[16] There are numerous other examples also of other gods who are connected with *Ṛta*.

Through this great conception of *Ṛta* the multiplicity of gods is seen to reflect a single will and we see that the tendency of the Ṛgvedic religion was towards unity, whether monotheistic, pantheistic or henotheistic. Yāska, in his *Nirukta*, had

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classified the gods as belonging to the earth, air and sky.[17] But though such a classification is justifiable,[18] different hymns seem to exalt their particular gods to a position of supremacy and to endow them with all the attributes of supremacy. In the first hymn of the second book of the *Ṛgveda* Agni is called the ruler of the Universe, the Lord of men, etc. while, in the tenth book, Indra is said to be the greatest of all. Similarly, each god, when prayed to, is said to be the greatest. Max Müller called this 'Henotheism'.[19] Many verses give a suggestion as if in reality all the gods are one. In the book III Hymn V addressed to Agni, Agni is called both Mitra and Varuna together with the epithet housefriend. Similarly one poet says—

They call him Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, Agni and he is
heavenly, nobody winged Garutmān (i.e. sun)
To what is one, sages give many titles:
They call it Agni, Yama, Mātariśvān.[20]

Even scholars who call the Ṛgvedic religion polythestic, do admit that during the later part of the Ṛgvedic period there was a steady movement towards unity. In the later Vedic age we know that, as quasi-mechanical and quasi-magical sacrifices were elaborated, a class of thinkers arose who began to ask philosophical questions about the true nature of the gods, etc. They first devoloped the system of symbolic meditation out of sacrifices and rescued the symbolic essence for meditation. Out of these meditations it was easy to see that the various gods were nothing but elaborations of the same God,[21] and also that there is a parallelism between the microcosm and the macrocosm. Thus they reach the sense of the same divine principle within and without. Monotheism and monism get united in a cosmic pantheism.[22]

In *Nirukta* and the *Brahmasūtras* it is mentioned that by virtue of its supernatural omnipotence, the deity is at once one and many, personal and impersonal.[23] Finally, after the emergence of the concept of *Iśvara*, Brahman, *Paramātman*, *Parama Puruṣa*, the word *devatā* tended to lose its significance, e.g. in the *Gītā*.

Let us now examine the elements of bhakti in the *devatā* worship: It is not very correct to think of deva worship as a mechanical and magical sacrificial ritual for the sake of wordly ends having no scope for bhakti.[24] Such an interpretation is plausible only in the context on the later sharp distinction between *devatās* on the one hand and *Iśvara* on the other, which was not true in the earlier age. This is the reason why nearly all the elements necessary for bhakti can be gleaned from the Vedas.[25] The presense of elements such as the sense of wonder, justice, grace and helpfulness in the gods, the correlation of grace and faith, repentance, confession, forgiveness of sin, the sense of communion with deity and of his omnipresence and immanence, have surprised scholars who regard the Vedic religion as essentially polytheistic and animistic in character[26] and have led others like Macnicol[27] admit that it is not necessary to suppose that bhakti which is especially associated with a theistic faith always follows an independent line of development of its own, or that it arose in entire independence from the Vedas. It may arise, and, as a matter

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of fact, we find that it continuously does, whenever a strong religious feeling makes its appearance in almost any religious environment.

In the early Vedic age, just as there is no sharp distinction between *devatā* on the one hand and Brahman on the other, similarly there is no sharp distinction between *trivarga* and mokṣa.[28] The Ṛgvedic Aryans worshipped for life and light--though it is true that the elements of transcendence was not prominent either in the nature of the deity or in the goal of the worshipper.

Sacrifice or *Yajña* was their chief mode of religious expression. Ṛgvedic sacrifice is often regarded as essentially a bride and, thus, not conducive to the ideal of bhakti to secure the favour of God, but, in fact, the Ṛgvedic hymns contain the ideal of the man who follows *Ṛta* as living in the invisible companionship of gods on whom he fees his dependence. The sacrifice only symbolizes this dependence of man on gods. All that man receives is as a favour from the gods to whom he expresses his sense of obligation in sacrifice.[29] Thus, the original mode of Vedic worship contains a true element of bhakti. The beneficial powers of light, though cosmic in their nature, and beyond the distinction of personal and impersonal, as pointed out by Yāska, are still capable of responding personally to their worshippers and of having a personal relationship with them. Nearly all the gods have personal relationship with the worshipper. This relationship takes the form of that of a parent; guardian, friend, saviour, Lord, and sometimes even as a spouse. The following passages will illustrate this :

As a father to his son—"Be to us easy of approach, even as a father to his son : Agni, be with us for our weal".[30]

As a protector of men on all occasions Indra is invoked—"Indra mayst thou be ours in all occasions, protector of the men, most gentle-hearted..."[31]

Bṛhaspati is addressed as a friend : "...though hard to win, a Friend beloved most dearly..."[32]

Agni is addressed as a Lord—"He who gives food...may be as priest prosper his servants' dwellings."[33]

As a spouse—"I like a brid egroom thinking of his consort, call hither Indra, him invoked of many".[31]

An intense longing for the communion and friendship of the gods and also the sense of a very close relationship with them is seen, as in the following lines :

"To gain thy mercy, Varuṇa, with hymns we bind thy heart as binds
The charioteer his tethered horse etc."[35]

Similarly in hymn 88 of Book VII the singer believes that he has been forsaken by his helper Varuṇa. With anguish he remembers his communion with the god in former times. In a vision he sees himself translated into Varuṇa's realm. He goes sailing with the Lord, is called to be *Ṛṣi* or holy singer to the god and is

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in the holy palace with Him. Now Varuṇa has withdrawn His favour. Yet, let Him have mercy on His singer and not punish him so stringently for his sins.

"What hath become of those our ancient friendships when without enmity we walked together ?"[36]

If we examine the hymns of the *Ṛgveda* carefully we find all types of prayers which show devotion. There are prayers of petition, prayers of glorification, prayers of silence.

Prayers of Petition

Petition is found in three forms—demanding worldly things, promising to follow the Lord's will, asking forgiveness for sins. (All these three elements may be discovered, for example, in the Lord's prayer—"Give us this day our daily bread"—as demanding worldly goods; "Thy will be done"—following His command; "Forgive us our trespasses"—asking forgiveness).

Demanding various things also includes protection, and prayers asking for protection are innumerable.

Asking for Worldly goods—

(Thou who) "hast shattered Pipru's strong forts, who knew the viles of serpents, thou gavest to thy worshipper Ṛjiśvan imperishable wealth, O bounteous giver".[37]

There are innumerable hymns asking the protection of the gods and their shelter; nearly all gods are prayed to thus.[38]

The Aśvins are appealed to most for various worldly needs, e.g. protection from old age, bondage and distress.

"Ye freed Cyavana from old age and weakness :
Ye brought the courser fleet of foot to Pedu
Ye rescued Atri from distress and darkness and
Loosened for Nahuṣa the bonds that bound him".[39]

They are appealed to for help in childbirth,[40] and illness. The sage Ghoṣā asks them to save her from leprosy[41] and get her married.[42]

The worshipper, who promises to obey the will of God, is seen mostly in the hymns to Varuṇa. "May the dear Gods Varuṇa and Mitra conduct us by the most effective path-ways".[43]

Finally, the third aspect of the prayer of petition is aking for forgiveness from sin. This is also seen mostly in the hymns to Varuṇa and Mitra. The most interesting hymn in this connection has been mentioned while discussing the longing for God.[44]

Prayer of Glorification

The are also numerous.[45]

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Prayers of Silence

At many places there is the sense of the majesty of gods exceeding human speech and imagination. Such a feeling of divine transcendence would normally lead to awe struck and calm contemplation where prayer merges into silence. *Puruṣa-sūkta* is an excellent example of this. "All creatures are one-fourth of Him, three-fourths of Him is eternally in heaven". In these lines a sense of transcendence can be seen.

Concepts of Grace

The concept of grace, again, is linked with the inward sense of dependence and silence. Grace, it has to be remembered, is an essential element of bhakti.

There are many references to Varuṇa's grace which is the basis for the hope of the worshipper who is conscious of his having violated Varuṇa's law.[46] At one place Indra-Varuṇa are asked to bestow their friendship, kingship and favourable grace.[47] Many scholars like Ruben and Dandekar suggest that Viṣṇu must have been an eminently revered God in the very ancient times. Dandekar says he must have been relegated to the background in the Vedic times on account of some of his characteristics which must have been repugnant to the vedic religious ideology. He must have been either one of the gods of some pre-Vedic tribe or a popular god among the masses of Aryan nomads themselves and, therefore, not acceptable to the Vedic Aryans perhaps on account of some 'revolting' traits in the nature of this God.[48]

Varuṇa's grace deserves 'slave like' devotion.[49] Those who received his grace become his beloved.

"Cast all these sins away like
Loosened fetters, and Varuṇa let us
Be thine own beloved".[50]

Among the means of gaining the mercy of Varuṇa may be mentioned moral seriousness in trying to discover ones 'hidden faults,[51] confession of sin,[52] longing to be justified in the sight of Varuṇa,[53] oblations and sacrifices, and hymns of praise.

"To gain thy mercy Varuṇa, with hymns we bind thy heart as binds the charioteer his tethered horse".[54]

The Vasiṣṭha hymns to Varuṇa in the *Ṛgveda*[55] are especially to be noted.

Two other gods should be mentioned separately while discussing the Vedic phase of devotion, viz., Viṣṇu and Rudra.

Viṣṇu, who was to become so important in the epic and the Purāṇic literature occupies a subordinate position in the Vedic literature, but yet the germ of the sectarian religion called Vaiṣṇavism can be traced back to the Vedas.[56] Of the three *pādas* of Viṣṇu whereby the god maintained the dharmas, as fixed ordinances,

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the highest is described as known to Himself and visible only to the *sūris* (*Tad Viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padaṁ sadā paśyanti sūrayaḥ*) who must have been persons of wisdom favoured by the god Viṣṇu. This reminds us of the name Sūri applied to the sectarian devotees of Viṣṇu in later works as *Padma Tantra* (*Sūri suhṛd, Bhāgavataḥ Sātvatah Pañcakālavit, Ekāntikas, Tanmayaścapāñcarātrika ityapi*)[57] One may draw attention to the Ṛgvedic prayer—people may go after death to Viṣṇu's blessed abode which was HIS highest station beyond ordinary mortal ken and where god-seeking men delight, as well as to the later Vaiṣṇava conception of Viṣṇu's abode as the goal of spiritual aspiration of the devotees.

We find references to the recitation of Viṣṇu's birth story and name.[58] Mythology around him was already developing e.g. the myth of the three steps of Viṣṇu[59] and this may be the root of the later birth story of Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa identified with Viṣṇu. The recitation reminds us of the later *nāma-japa or nāmasaṅkīrtana*. It is well-known that later works offer lists of names of Viṣṇu Kṛṣṇa. Such works may be as early as the later samhitās (*c.* 1000-800 B.C.) as is proved by the *Śata-rudrīya* section of the *Yajurveda*. Hence the passages of the *Ṛgveda* quoted above, if read together, suggest the existence of some sort of sectarian worship of Viṣṇu, at least at a particular stage of its development.[60]

Similar is the case with Rudra, later identified with Śiva. The *Śata-Rudrīya* section of the *Yajurveda* contains one hundred names of Rudra.[61] Hence, we know that considerable importance was attached to the recitation or singing of the name of Rudra. The *Keśī-Sūkta* of the *Ṛgveda*[62] refers to some ascetics with matted hair (*keśin*) as half naked, wearing short garments of brown colour soiled with dust and frenzied by the performance of austerities. This description reminds us of the sectarian Pāśupata devotees of Rudra-Śiva as found in the later works and suggests that these were the people who recited or sang the *Śata-Rudriya* incorported in the *Yajurveda*. According to J.N. Banerjea the reference in the *Keśi-Sūkta* to Keśī Muni drinking a cup of poison with Rudra may have the germ of the later conception of Śiva as *nīlakaṇṭha*.[63]

There are some peculiar hymns in the *Ṛgdeva* which also show that the Vedic religion was not entirely ritualistic and sacrificial. They were aware of the necessity of faith which we know is an essential element of devotion. This is seen in the hymn to faith which begins:

"By Faith is Agni kindled, through
Faith is oblation offered up
We celebrate with praises Faith
Upon the height of happiness".[64]

Similarly, the goddess Aramati is invoked, who according to Griffith is the Goddess of Piety.[65] In the *Ṛgveda*, it is said, "may the sky scorch the man who hates devotion".[66]

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We may conclude by saying that all the six constituents of Prapatti by the Vaiṣṇavas can be found in the vedic prayers.[67] To do what is correct and avoid sin (*anukūlasya samkalpah* and *Pratikulasya varjanaṁ*) can be seen in the hymns dedicated to Varuṇa.[68] There the worshipper resolves to follow the path of *Ṛta* and to keep away from sins. *Rakṣiṣyatītiviśvāso* (Faith that the Lord will help and protect) is seen in nearly all the hymns.[69]

> "To him most liberal, lofty Lord of Lofty wealth, verily powerful and strong, I bring my hymn—whose checkless bounty as of waters down a slope, is spread abroad for all that live, to give them strength".[70]

Ātmaniksepa

The devotee surrenders himself completely to God.

> "O Agni, what thou deemest wealth, victorious and Immortal one,
> Bring thou to give us vigour, at your glad course splendid at sacrifices—
> Thou art waking great".[71]
> "O glorious Lord ! Can these beautiful prayers adorn you ? Now I only wish to surrender myself to you. Lord this is my call of surrender. All my senses are proceeding to be absorbed in you".[72]

Kārpaṇya or humility is expressed in the following verse :

> "Where is that gracious hand of thine, O Rudra, the hand that giveth health and bringeth comfort, Remover of the woe that Gods have sent us ? O strong one, look thou on me with compassion".[73]
> "As rats eat weavers' threads, cares are consuming me, thy singer, Śatakratu, me. Have mercy on us once, O Indra Bounteous Lord. Be thou a Father unto us".[74]

Efforts have been made to see the eleven *āsaktis* mentioned in the *Nāraaa Bhakti Sūtra* in the Vedas.[75] *Guṇamāhātmyāsakti* and *Pūjāsakti* has been illustrated from the *Ṛgveda*.[76] *Rupāsakti* has been illustrated from the *Atharvaveda*.[77] *Smaraṇāsakti* includes *kīrtana*, *japa* and remembrance of the highest Being. For example,

> "O Agni, they who understand stir thee to action with their thoughts :
> So let our songs enhance thy might".[78]

The devotee meditates only on Him and prays to God that he might do so always.

Examples of *Dāsyāsakti* are found at several places.[79] Even the sense of *Parama Viraha* has been sought to be traced.[80] *Tanmayatā* may be noted markedly.[81] The devotee's heart does not go anywhere having his dear Puruhūta. The goal of all these disires is He. *Sakhyāsakti* is illustrated at numerous places. Agni, Indra, Viśvedevas and Aśvin are invoked as a friend.[82]

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Of *Kāntāsakti* there are only some indications, for example—

"Thoughts ancient, seeking wealth, with adoration, with newest lands have sped to thee, O Mighty.
As yearning wives cleave to their yearning husbands, so cleave our hymns to thee, O Lord most potent."[83]

The devotee's senses want to touch the god as a desirous wife wants to touch a desirous husband.

"Who hath with prayer bowed to the Soma Lover ? What pious man endues the beams of morning ?
Who seeks bond, friendship, brotherhood, with Indra.
Who hath recourse unto the Sage for succour.[84]
"For here like flies on honey those who pray to thee sit hy the juice that they have poured,
Wealth-craving singers have on Indra set their hope as men set foot upon a car."[85]

The devotees are absorbed in the recitations of the Lord as the bees in honey. The devotee desirous of dwelling in Him after surrendering all his desires in Him becomes like a man becomes after sitting in a *ratha*.

Bhakti in tho later Vedic age

Factors helping and hindering the growth of bhakti in the Vedic Age

As already said, we find in the religious devotion of earlier period a spontaneous element where man feels himself in the presence of an exalted power which is essentially moral and beneficient, functioning cosmically, but yet capable of a personal relationship with the worshipper.

The period after this was dominated by an increasing ritualism. The growth of ritualism tended to obscure the personal element and substituted for it elaborate and impersonal formulae till the gods were themselves obscured by the *Mimāṁsaka* doctrines of the Word. They lost all their splendour and power and became tools in the hands of the sacrifices. But this had its advantages too. The gods who were not so important in the early Vedic period were spared this elaborate ritualism, e.g. Rudra and Viṣṇu. There was naturally a reaction amidst people. They were tired of too much of ritualism, did not believe in it and began to be attracted by these gods.[86] The more thoughtful among them reflected upon the necessity of such sacrifices and began to see the importance of contemplation :

"*Plavā hyete adṛḍhā yajñyarūpa aṣṭādaśoktamavaraṁ yeṣu karma*
Etacchreyo yeabhinandanti mūḍhā jarāmṛtyum te punarevāpi yānti"[87]

Hence, in a way, all this ritualism was one of the factors which by way of reaction led to the birth of Upaniṣadic thought.[88]

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In the Upaniṣadic period the tendency towards metaphysical speculation, which tended to review the gods abstractly as aspects of one underlying reality,[89] tended to lead to a premium on intellectual knowledge. This also obstructed bhakti by losing the richness of divine reality in intellectually concerned abstraction. On the other hand, it had the opposite effect of liberating the worshipper's mind from the elements of externality, convention and primitive anthropomorphism and made it possible for a purer and more exalted attitude to develop, especially, because it tended to give the devotee a greater insight into his own nature. So long as human nature was bound up with the natural life of body and mind, it tended to project anthropomorphism on the deity also. Now the realization of the transcendental nature of the Self made it possible for the devotion also to acquire a seeking for the ideal and real self.[90]

Another very important development was the emergence of monotheism, which provided the metaphysical basis for the later theory of bhakti. The concept of Brahman was the first stage in the development of monotheism.

The story of Umā Haimavatī in the *Kenopaniṣad* clearly shows this development. Indra, Vāyu and Agni, the most important gods, are shown to be nothing before the one Brahman and it is clear that Brahman is the one power behind all the gods. Brahman is defined both by (i) affirmation and (ii) denial. Affirmation is bold. 'All this is verily Brahman'.[91] Negatively, all the positive qualities are denied in the well known '*neti neti*'. '*Neti neti*' simply signifies the distinction of ātman (Brahman identified with ātman) from all that is here and does not convey any sense of excluding everything from it. It does not deny the reality of existence; it 'denies all the empirical characterization of reality'. It just signifies that reality is something unique, not comprehended in the empirical. The denial of attributes to Brahman deoes not reduce it to a void, but points to its fullness :

Pūrṇamadaḥ pūrṇamidaṁ pūrṇāt pūrṇamudacyate
Pūrṇasya pūrṇamādāya pūrṇamevāvaśiṣyati".[92]

Even though it is the cause of the world, it remains absolutely undiminished even after the whole of creation ; Brahman was identified with the inner self (*ātmā*). In the conversation between Dṛpta Bālāki and Ajātaśatru, the former says in the end that he meditates on the person who is in the self. Even the words '*sohamasmi*' point to the same thing.

In the Upaniṣadic thought the Ultimate Reality has both the aspects of Transcendence and Immanence. The Transcendent becomes Immanent when viewed from the aspect of the world and then it is called *Īśvara*. *Īśvara* is said to be the vast refuge of all,[93] who 'sits as Ruler in the heart of all creatures'[94] and is 'the beneficent Lord'. The *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* says : "This is the Lord of all, the knower of all, the Lord".[95]

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It is said many times that the primal God is within the cave of one's own heart.[96]

A progress from polytheism to monotheism is seen even in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* in the the conversation between Yājñavalkya and Vidagdha Sākalya. When the latter asks Yājñavalkya how many gods are there, he replies three thousand and three. When he asks again, Yājñavalkya reduces the number of gods. Finally, he replies that there is one God. Hence it shows that all other gods are mere manifestations of the one God—"whose body the earth is, whose sight is fire, whose mind is light and who is the final resort of all human souls"—

"*Katama eko deva iti...sarvasyātmanaḥ parāyāṇaṁ.*"[9]

But though this sort of monotheism was seen in the very early Upaniṣads, it is the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* which clearly develops the conception of the personal God. The only God is Rudra, creator, preserver and destroyer and identical with the self.

The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* belongs to the Taittirīya school of the *Yajurveda*. The elements associated with theism, personal God and emotion, become prominent in it.[98]

It is a very developed monotheism that we see in this Upaniṣads. It advocates the doctrine of a triune unity. Over both perishable (primary matter) and the soul, the imperishable Hara rules.[99] One recognizes the triune unity of the enjoyer, the object of enjoyment and the actuator. This is the threefold Brahman.[100]

Rudra is the one supreme God, there is no place for a second. He rules all the world with his ruling powers. He stands behind all the creatures and having created all the worlds, he, the protector, rolls it up at the end of time.

Eko hi Rudro na dvitiyāya tasthurya imānlokānīśata Īśānībhiḥ
Pratyaṅ janāstiṣṭhati sañcukopāntakāle saṁsṛiya viśvā bhuvanāni copāḥ.[101]

Having an eye on every side and a face on every side, having an arm on every side, the one God forges together with hands, with wings, creating the heaven and earth.[102] He is the source and origin of the gods, the ruler of all, Rudra the great seer, who of old created the golden germ (*hiraṇyagarbha*).[103]

We see a theistic theory of creation in the *Śvetāśvatara*. Between this and the emanatory theory of creation, *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* forms the link where it says that in the beginning of creation was the heavenly, formless person—unborn, lustrous, immutable. From Him were born life, mind, senses, space, earth; from Him gods of various description and so on.

Being influenced by the doctrine of Brahman, who is no other than Rudra-Śiva here, the poet describes Him thus—Higher than this is Brahman, the supreme, the

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great, hidden in all things, body by body, the one embracer of the universe. By knowing Him as Lord (*Īśa*) men become immortal.[104] He is the mighty person, of the colour of sun, beyond darkness.[105] Example of his immanence is:

"*Yo devo' gnau yo'psu yo viśvaṁ bhuvanaṁ āviveśa.*"[106]

An example of both His transcendence and immanence is, 'verily motionless like some tree does this God stand in heaven and yet by Him is the whole world filled'.[107] That which is beyond this world is without form and without ill.[108], Again the poet describes the all pervading character of God. He is the face, the neck, the head of all. He dwells in the heart of all things. He is all pervading and bountiful (*bhaghavan*), omnipresent and Śiva.[109] Men call him the great primeval person.[110] He is present in everything through immanence. The *Brahmavādins* speak of Him as eternal.[111]

Further the poet describes how the manifold world is created through the *śakti* or *Īśvara*. The one who Himself without 'colour',[112] by the manifested application of his power (*śakti-yoga*) distributes many 'colours' in His hidden purpose, and into Whom, its end and its beginning, the whole world dissolves. He is God, *Deva*.[113] The *Śvetāśvatara* forms the basis of the element of the principle of *Śiva-śakti* which became one of the chief tenets of the later Indian systems. It designates Śiva as *Māyin*. *Māyā* is also styled as *Prakṛti* and He who uses the *māyā* is called *Māheśvara*.[114] Hence, a clear indication that Śiva is the possessor of *māyā* which also acts as *Prakṛti*, the creatrix of the universe.[115]

The doctrine of *paśu*, *pati* and *pāśa* is also found in its embryonic condition:

"*Sanyuktametat kṣaramakṣaraṁ ca vyaktāvyaktaṁ bharate viśvamīśaḥ,*
anīśaścātmā badhyate bhoktṛ bhāvāj jñātvā devam mucyate sarvapāśaiḥ".[116]

He is the Lord Siva who is hidden in all things, is the sole enveloper of universe, (who is the very subtle film at the lap of ghee), by the knowledge of whom comes the freedom from the meshes of ignorance.

"*Ghṛtātparaṁ maṇḍamivātisūkṣmaṁ jñātvā Śivaṁ sarvabhūteṣu gūḍham*
Viśvasyaikaṁ pariveṣṭitāraṁ jñāivā devaṁ mucyate sarvapāśaiḥ".[117]

His relation with theu niverse—

He presides over it and puts into operation all the qualities.[118]

His relationship with the individual as seen from the above passages is that of love. Rudra is the protector. The worshipper in distress cries out to Him: May your face which is gracious, protect me for ever—

"*Ajāta ityevaṁ kaścidbhīruḥ pratipadyate*
Rudra yatte dakṣiṇaṁ mukhaṁ tena mām pāhi nityaṁ".[119]

Further Rudra also grants desires—

Nityo nityānāṁ cetanaścetanānāmeko bahūnāṁ yo vidadhāti kāmān
Tatkāraṇaṁ sānkhya yogādhigamyaṁ jñātva devaṁ mucyate sarvapāśaiḥ".[120]

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He is the eternal among the eternals, the intelligent among the intelligents, the one among the many, who grants desires. He is the cause which is to be apprehended by discrimination or discipline. By knowing God one is freed from all fetters.[121]

He is an ethical God as he promotes virtues and dispels sins. He is known as existing in one self.[122]

He is truly a theistic God as the poet gives a very fine description of the abode of God "The sun shines not there, nor the moon and stars, these lightenings shine not, much less this fire. After Him as He shines, doth everything shine. The whole world is illuminated by His light".[123] He, one soul (*haṁsa*), resides in the midst of the soul.[124]

The most important of all is the mention of the word bhakti:

"Yasya dev parābhaktiryathā dev tathā gurau
Tasyaite kathitā hyarthāḥ prakāśante mahātmana iti".[125]

"These subjects which have been declared shine forth to the high souled one who has the highest devotion for God and for his spiritual teacher as for God".

Finally we come to the concept of grace. "One beholds Him as being actionless and becomes freed from sorrow, when through the grace of the creator, he sees the Lord and His majesty".[126]

Also—

Tapaḥ prabhāvāddeva prasādācca brahma ha śvetāśvataro atha vidvān
Atyāśramibhyaḥ paramaṁ pavitraṁ provāc samyagṛṣisanghajuṣṭaṁ.[127]

"By the power of austerity and the grace of God the wise *Śvetāśvatara* in proper manner spoke about Brahman, the supreme, the pure to the advanced ascetics, what is pleasing to the company of the seers".

The concept of grace is also met with in other Upanisads. In the *Kena Upaniṣad* it is said that Vāyu, Agni and Indra, obtained the knowledge that it (the straw) was Brahman through the grace of Umā:

Tasmādvā Indroatitarā mivānyāndevān sa hyenannediṣṭhaṁ
pasparśa sa hyenat prathamo vidāñcakāra brahmeti."[128]

In the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* also the doctrine of grace can be detected. There are two verses which indicate this, though both are objects of controversy:

"Tam akratuḥ paśyati vītaśoko dhātuḥ prasādān
mahimānamātmanaḥ".[129]

Dr. Radhakrishnan, however, says that instead of *dhātuḥ prasādāt* which means the grace of God, *dhātuprasādāt* is possible which means through the tranquillity of

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the mind and senses (*dhātu*).

"Nāyamātmā pravacanena labhyo na medhayā na bahunā śrutena
Yamevaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyastasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanūṁ svāṁ".[130]

The self cannot be realized by instructions nor by intellectual powers, nor by much learning. He is to be attained only by the one whom the Self chooses. To such a one the Self reveals its true nature". Śaṅkara, however, gives a different interpretation by an ingenious exegesis : "Him alone whom he chooses by that same self is his own self obtainable. The self reveals its own character to one that seeks it exclusively".

In the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*—

"Nāyamātmā pravacanena labhyo na medhayā na bahunā śrutena
yamevaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyastaṣyais ātmā vivṛṇute tanūṁ svāṁ".[131]

"This self cannot be attained by instruction, intellectual power, much hearing. He is to be attained by the one whom the self chooses. To such a one the self reveals its true nature". Often the word 'faith' is mentioned, and the Upaniṣads frequently say that faith is the most important thing in God-realization. This is clearly the attitude of one whose heart is filled with devotion. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, Āruṇi boldly postulates an idealistic monism in the famous declaration—*Tattvamasi*, 'that thou art', i.e, the spirit in man is the same as the cosmic reality which underlies phenomena. This fact is grasped only by faith.[132] Though one cannot see pure being by one's senses (as one cannot see salt dissolved in water), yet it is there—*"Tām hovācaḥ atravāva kila sat, saumya na nibhālayase ataiva kila".*[133]

"Not by speech, not by mind, not by sight, can He be apprehended. How can He be apprehended ? Except by him who says 'He is.'"[134]

In the *Praśnopaniṣad*—Pippalāda recommends the practice of austerity, chastity and faith.[135] We have already seen reference to devotion in the *Śvetāśvatara.*[136] It is also used in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*[137] as *upāsā* and *bhāva* : "we should take into our hands the bow of *Upaniṣads* and put upon it the arrow of the soul sharpened by devotion. We should next stretch it with concentrated attention and penetrate the mark which is supreme Brahman."[138] Similarly, we see evidence of the devotional impulse in the heart of Nārada when he implores Sanat Kumāra to initiate him into spiritual wisdom in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad.*[139]

Another reason why the Upaniṣads do not have only cold intellectualism is because of *upāsanā* or meditative activity. *Upāsanā* is the steady maintenance of one-pointed devotion of thought towards a particular object in the way sanctioned by the scriptures, uninterrupted by any other consciousness apart from it.[149] Literally, it means "to come near some one". Hence, it involves three factors: (i) the subject who contemplates, (ii) the object of contemplation, and (iii) the act of contemplation. There is to be a constant thinking of the object in *upāsanā.* Hence, the

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object of contemplation should be an object of supreme adoration. One must be passionately fond of the object he contemplates upon. In the *Kena Upaniṣad*, Brahman is called the object of all desire. "That verily is what is called the dearest of all."[141]

In the *Kaṭhopaniṣad*, *brahman* is called the source of joy—

"Etacchrutvā samparigṛhya martyaḥ pravṛhya
Dharmyamanumetamapya sa modate modanīyam hi
Labdhva vivṛtaṁ sadma naciketasaṁ manye."[142]

In the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, He is called the adorable. It is said that having worshipped first that adorable God, who has many forms, the origin of all beings, who abides in our thoughts.

"Ādiḥ sa sanyoganimitta hetuḥ parastrikālādkaloapi
dṛṣṭaḥ, Tam viśvarūpaṁ bhavabhūtamīḍyaṁ devaṁ
svacittasthamupāsya pūrvam."[143]

With this may be compared: 'As a woman, intensely seeking the company of her lover, thinks of him alone even while engaged in her house-hold work, so does a contemplative soul meditates on his object of contemplation even while engaged otherwise."[144] Hence the element of devotion plays an important part in the act of contemplation and that is why the leaders of bhakti school like Rāmānuja lay particular emphasis on this *Dhruvā smṛti* or *Anudhyāna*, constant remembrance as the supreme means of *sādhanā*. This identification of *Dhruvā Smṛti* with *upāsanā* was also propounded by Brahmanandin.[145] Rāmānuja says "The means of the realization of Brahman is only supreme devotion (*parābhaktisevā*) which is of the nature of constant remembrance (*anudhyānarūpā*) generated by the extreme lovability of the thing and which is preceded by a knowledge of the Reality acquired from the scriptures and brought into being by the presence of the path of devotion. Helped by his own *karman*."[146] He also quotes Yāmunāchārya: "The supreme can be realized by the sole and absolute devotion of a man whose mind has been purified by both *iñānayoga* and *karmayoga*". He quotes the famous saying of the *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad*—on *vidyā* and *avidvā* and explains *vidyā* as contemplation which is of the nature of devotion—"*Bhaktirūpāpannaṁ dhyānamucyate*".[147] This devotion or attachment is called a form of *jñāna* by Rāmānuja in which the supreme is realized to be the most adorable thing to the exclusion of all other things and which also gives rise to an utter dislike for everything else. The *Nārada-Bhaktisūtra* says that bhakti requires absolute devotion to the object of contemplation as well as indifference to all other things opposed to it.[148]

Vedāntadeśika quotes a verse which shows clearly the different steps through which *upāsanā* leads to bhakti or absolute devotion for the object of contemplation. It says : "knowledge ends in meditation, meditation culminates in constant remembrance, that leads to a seeing or realization, i.e. an insight into Reality, and this insight begets devotion."[149]

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Let us now examine the Upaniṣadic passages which show an insight into Reality which can be clearly seen begetting devotion.

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, in the third Brāhmaṇa, it is said that the world of Brahman has the highest bliss. Being healthy and wealthy is the highest bliss for man, hundred times that bliss is the one unit of bliss of fathers, one hundred times that bliss is one unit of the bliss of *gandharva* world, hundred times that bliss is one unit of bliss of gods by action, hundred times that is the one unit of bliss of god by birth, hundred times that bliss is one unit of bliss of the world of Prajāpati, hundred times that is the bliss of the world of *hiraṇyagarbha*. The highest bliss is the world of Brahman.[150]

In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, Sanatkumāra teaches the doctrine of *bhūmā*, infinite happiness, which arises by the vision of divinity all around. He says that the infinite is happiness. No happiness is finite. One must desire to understand the infinite:

"*Yo vaibhūmā tat sukhaṁ, nālpe sukhamasti*".[151]

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He says thet ātman is the source of every thing—power, knowledge and ecstacy.[152]

Sanatkumāra says that 'verily who sees this (that the self is everywhere) who thinks this, who understands this, he has pleasure in the self, he has delight in the self, he has union in the self, he has joy in the self, he is independent (self ruler), he has unlimited freedom in all worlds':[153]

He implies that spiritual happiness is the cause of action, which is the cause of faith which in turn is the cause of belief. When a man believes, he thinks; when he thinks, he knows; when he knows, he reaches truth. Thus happiness, action, faith, belief, thought, knowledge and truth constitute the moral ladder to realization. We had seen in the verses describing the state of *bhūmā* that the ultimate stage of spiritual realization is the attainment of bliss and happiness. From this verse we know that even for realizing that condition spiritual happiness is a must.

In the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* in the section *Brahmānandavallī* it is said that bliss is Brahman. 'He who knows that bliss of Brahman fears nothing nor at any time'.[154] It is said that this bliss is many times other types of bliss, of men, fairies, fathers, bliss of Gods, Bṛhaspati, Brahmā etc.[155] Bliss is mentioned as the matrix of being. "For truly, beings here are born from bliss, when born they live by bliss, and into bliss when departing they enter".[156] Then occurs a mystical chant,[157] which has an intimation of mystic rapture.

Another example of mystic ecstacy should be noted. The sage of *Muṇḍako-paniṣad* when he comes to realize the immortal Brahman, falls into mystic raptures when he sees that "the Brahman was before him, and behind him, to his right, left, above and below" and breaks forth into Leibnitzean exclamation that "this was the best of all possible worlds".[158]

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Hence we see that the result of Upaniṣadic contemplation is not a cold knowledge of the absolute, but a mystical realization of the absolute, when he reaches a stage in which he is full of bliss, love and happiness. According to Ranade mysticism is the culmination of all philosophies and one who does not understand that the cosmology, psychology, metaphysics and ethics of the Upadiṣads are merely a propaedeutic to this mystical doctrine, can scarcely be said to have understood the spirit of Upaniṣadic philosophy.[158] He goes on to say that the ideal of the Upaniṣadic sage differs on the one hand from the stoical sage who represents in himself the acme of moral perfection connected with an intellectual contemplation instead of a mystical realization of the absolute. On the other hand he differs from the Christian saint who no doubt sticks rightly to the norm of conduct, faith, hope and charity but who centres his hopes for mystical perfection in an another—Jesus Christ—not in himself. The Upaniṣadic sage believes in the possibility of a greater or less mystical realization. For every being according to the greater or less worth of his character, belief and endeavour sees the ātman in all and sees the ātman alone. This is the sense of the oneness of all beings. The immanence of divine self in all men makes them essentially one. This is a deeper principle than the brotherhood of man.[160]

Hence even in the Upaniṣads, elements of bhakti are visible. Macnicol says that it is not correct to see an antagonism between the *Bhāgavata* religion and the Upaniṣads. No doubt the philosopher is not always the saint but there is no reason why they should not arise from the same circle of thought. The difference between the theism of the Upaniṣads and the 'passionate theism' of Vasudevism is only a difference of degree and not an antagonism. Macnicol further says that whether or not the Upanisadic teaching is theistic will depend upon the conclusion to which those lines of inquiry lead us. (i) were the Upaniṣads rightly intepreted by Sankara as inculcating as their highest truth the illusoriness of the world and of the individual spirit and the sole reality of the undifferentiated Brahman? Is *māyāvāda* the true doctrine of the Vedānta? Is all difference lost in the union with Brahmad ? In these cases Theism is not possible. (ii) Secondly, we have to ask how is Brahman attained? Is the method purely intellectual? In that case also theism is not possible.[161]

Let us first consider the second objection. We have in fact already discussed it before. We have seen that *upāsanā* involves devotion and that the result of *upāsanā* is mystic realization which is far from a cold knowledge of the absolute but involves bliss and happiness and emotion akin to those found in devotion. As regards his first objection, Macnicol tries to give an answer to it to some extent. He says that the doctrine of *māya* is unknown in the Upaniṣads. It only occurs in the *Śvetāśvatara* Upaniṣads where it did not have the meaning that Sankara later on gave it.

If the Upaniṣads in the *Aitereya Āraṇyaka* are the oldest, then, 'idealistic monism' is not the earliest view of the Upaniṣads. But then "*Tat tvam asi*" is not

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necessary antagonistic to theism. How far this doctrine becomes anti-thestic will depend upon whether the soul of the emancipated are absorbed and indistiguishably lost in the universal self or not. To this objection Macnicol himself says that the soul is not entirely lost. In the end he says that the Upaniṣadic doctrine which is earlier in date was less predominantly intellectual than that which grew up later. In the oldest of the three Upaniśads of *Āitareya Āraṇyaka* the nature of the ātman is not conceived of as purely *prajñā*. In the second Upaniṣad in this *Āraṇyaka* the self is knowledge and that knowledge is Brahman. That knowledge is vitally connected with all life and action and is that by which we breathe and love and desire. Also in *Bṛhadāranyaka* and *Chāndogya Upaniṣads* the process by which Brahman is realized and reached is not purely intellectual and not, therefore, irreconcilable with a theistic conception of his nature. It is largely a moral process of self-purification, and self-control, of meditation and insight.

As regards the objection of Macnicol to Śankara's thought we must point out that *Advaitism* does not negate the conception of God. According to *Advaitism* God is the personal aspect of the Absolute and the Absolute is the impersonal aspect of God. Attempts of Madhusūdana Sarasvati, and those of Kashmira Śaivas (especially Abhinava Gupta) as well as those of Advaitīśāktas have reconciled *advaita* with bhakti. From the Advaitic point of view the search of the individual for the Divine is part of the same *līlā* which has created the sense of an individual separate from God. To deny feeling and action in the Absolute does not imply any deficiency in the Absolute. It is only part of an attempt to express the infinite nature of the Absolute where all attributes get denied. Such denials do not limit the Absolute because it is not a negative entity. The Absolute is the most positive, the fullest, where all known attributes get perfected and surpassed.

As Vidyāraṇya says, man seeks the self in all seekings. Spiritual life begins when one cleaves to the infinite essence underlying finite manifestations. Hence Advaitic knowledge far from impoverishing the love and longing for infinite self-consciousness is the essential condition for such a quest. If God is really other than man their kinship will forever be in jeopardy. If on the other hand man essentially needs God and can be with Him eternally, can he be different from Him? As regards *māyā*, Śankara does not say that the world is phenomenally unreal. It is only noumenally, *sub specie aeternitatis*, that it is unreal.

In the end let us also see some examples of Mādhavaism and the triune unity of Rāmānuja in the Upaniśads. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* supports the doctrine of Mādhava that absolution consists not in being merged in the Absolute nor even in being assimilated in bliss but in coming near His presence and participating in His glory so that the devotee may be lifted according to the requirements of the doctrine of *krame mukti*, towards the highest state of absolution at the end of time.

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The triune Absolute of Rāmānuja consists of Nature, soul and God. This finds support in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad.*

"Man need but know the three entities which constitute the Absolute namely—enjoyer, enjoyed and the mover, when this is known nothing else remains to be known".[162]

There is a passage in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* which tells us that God is the *antaryāmin* of the universe (in the conversation between Uddalāka Āruṇi and Yājñavalkya). This constitutes the fundamental position in the philosophy of Rāmānuja when he calls God the soul of nature.

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8. Ibid., V, 12, 2.
9. Ibid.,
10. Ibid., V. 12, 1. In order to see how far *Ṛta* is connected with Agni, one has only to read the hymns dedicated to Agni. Sri Aurobindo in his *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*, essauys a mystic in ter pretation.
11. *Ṛg.*, VI, 57, 19.
12. Ibid., I, 124, 3.
13. Ibid., VII, 44, 6.
14. Ibid., VIII, 25, 3.
15. Ibid., X, 67, 2.
16. Ibid., 67, 8.
17. Three -fold division of the gods- *Ṛg*, I, 139, 11; See also, *Sūryo no divas pātu Vāto antarāsi. Agnir naḥ parithvebyah*". *Ṛg.* X, 159, 1. cf. '*,Tisra eva devatā iti Naiṛnktāḥ. Agnih prthvī-sthāno, Vāyurvā Indro vā antarikṣasthānaḥ sūryo dyusthānaḥ.*" *Nirukta*, VII, 5.
18. This traditional classification cannot apply logically, since some, at least of these gods, do not fall into any one of these three categories. But, it is, of course, simple and 'most convenient.' cf. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, pp. 19-20.

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19. Many modern scholars criticise this theory. They regard it more as a species of poetic licence by which a singer magnified the god whom he was invoking rather than an evidence that the poet actually claimed that the god to whom he was then praying was superior to all others.

P.S. Deshmukh too thinks that such overdrawing is natural to all religious poetry and does not consequently involve any necessary implication of progress from the thought of the many to the thought of the one. However, he concedes : "But, yet this opportunist monotheism may be taken on the whole to have conduced to the formulation of a belief in a single God, in place of the multiple deity of an earlier time." See P.S. Deshmukh, *Religion in Vedic Literature*; Keith, op. cit., vol. I, p. 89.

Many scholars do not regard Henotheism as deteriorated monotheism or half developed monotheism, but in a way implicit opposition to all monotheism, Brahman, the neutral principle, manifests itself in many *nāma-rūpas*. Each of them is significant as a symbol. None of them is of exclusive unique significance. The concept of later *Iṣṭadevatā* or the 'chosen deity' plays an important part in the concept of Monotheism. Hence, it does not arise from worldly utilitarian motivcs, but from the visualization of a profound religious truth ever present in the Indian mind. While acknowledging monism, one might have one particular *nāma-rūpa* of Brahman as one's *Iṣṭadevatā*. The author also draws connection between Kathenotheism and the classical bhakti. cf., Prof. Betty Heimann, "Kathenotheism and Dānastutis or Kathenotheism and Iṣṭa Devatās," *ABORI*, vol. 25, pp. 26-33.

20. *Ṛg.*, I, 164, 46.

21. R.N. Dandekar refers to the frequent grouping of gods and to the concept of Viśvedevas and some other passages which are believed to reflect a kind of "integral multiplicity" in the divine world, but remarks : "In spite of all such indications, it must be clearly stated that monotheism in the sense of a single ethical God who, while being intimately involved in the world process, is yet transcendental in character, had not developed in the Vedic period." cf. R.N. Dandekar, 'God in Hindu Thought," *ABORI*, Vols. 48-49, 1968, p. 440.

22. According to Griswold, '*The Religion of the Ṛgveda*', pp. 344-48, this movement assumed two forms—one towards monotheism and the other towards pantheism. The clearest expression of the pantheistic view is in the hymn to Purusa. See *Rg.*, X, 90. As regards monotheism, he says that Varuna hymns reach very near the ideal of monotheism, but it remained only a speculative and ethical monotheism and never emerged into the conception of the holy God—as Varuna later dwindled into becoming only a water god and the concept of *Ṛta* was absorbed in the law of *karman*.

23. *Nirukta*, "*Māhābhāgyad devatāyā eka evātmā bahudhā stūyate*" : 7.1.5; *Brahmasūtra*, 1.3.26-33

24. Betty Heimann, says that in the Vedic period a notion of *do ut des* (I give (do) so that you, the God, will or can give (*des*) in return) prevailed. They offered gifts for a double assistance—firstly, for the efficacy of their prayers and secondly, for the efficient response of the gods. The author says that their prayer was a magical force of concentration and attraction of the deity and theirs of a surrender to a higher person. According to him, bhakti in the Vedic hymns does not imply an humble submission of a lower to infinitely higher being, but it presupposes an agreement between two partners—like partners in human love. True, the devotee feels himself as the weaker, the

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female partner in this love union, and God as the male partner, but, yet, bhakti of the Vedas is not a submissive unconditional surrender to the deity in question, but it is an agreement *do ut des* or a magical incitement for contact. cf. Betty Heimann, *Facets of Indian Thought*, pp. 83ff.

25. D.C. Sircar regards bhakti as an un-Aryan concept gradually adopted by the mixed Aryo-non-Aryan population of the country, because the religious life of the Ṛgvedic Aryans is known to have been dominated by the sacrificial cult having a different basis and approach. cf. D.C. Sircar, *Studies in the Religious Life of Ancient and Medieval India*, p. 7; Maria Susai Dhavamony admits that though an under-current of bhakti is seen in this not wholly sacrificial religion, yet the request for temporal pleasures are too much in the foreground. See, Maria Susai Dhavamony, *Love of God according to Saiva Siddhanta*, pp. 47-56.
26. Griswold, *The Religion of the Rgveda*, pp. 366-67.
27. Macnicol, *Indian Theism from the Vedic to the Mohammadan period*, p. 35ff.
28. According to Dr. G.C. Pande, the conception of Mokṣa is a later phenomenon. About the Rgvedic people he says : "Of *Vairāgya*, of *mukti* as opposed to *Bhukti*, there is as yet not the slightest awareness...", cf. G.C. Pande, *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*, pp. 284-85.
29. cf. Keith, op. cit., vol. I, p. 259.
30. "*Sa naḥ piteva sūnavegne sūpāyano bhava sacasvā naḥ svastaye*"; *Ṛg.*, I, 1, 9; cf. Griffith, *Hymns of the Ṛgveda*, Vol. I, p. 2.
31. "*Tvamasmākmindra viśvadhā syā avṛkatamo narāṁ nṛpātā...*" *Ṛg.*, I, 174, 10; Cf. Griffith, op. cit., p. 240.
32. "*...Durniyantuḥ pariprīto na mitraḥ...*"; *Ṛg.*, I, 190, 6; cf. Griffith, op. cit., p. 254.
33. "*...Hota'ivā sadma vidhatah vi tārīt*"; *Rg.*, I, 73, 1; cf. Griffith, op. cit., p. 254.
34. "*Maryo na yoṣāmābhi manyamāno'cchā vivakmi puruhūtamindram*"; *Rg.*, IV, 20, 5; cf., Griffith, op. cit., p. 420; Besides, some other examples of personal relationship with gods are as follows : *Sarasvatī*—as mother, *Ṛg.*, II, 41; *Agni* as Lord, *Ṛg.*, IV, 11, 6; as mother, *Ṛg.*, V, 15, 4; *Indra* as Lord—*Ṛg.*, VII, 18, 2; *Ṛg.*, VII, 29, 3; as a bridegroom—*Ṛg.*, III, 62, 1 and 8; *Viśvedevas* as brothers, *Ṛg.*, V, 64, 13; *Aśvins*—as master, *Ṛg.*, VI, 63, 3.
35. *Ṛg.*, I, 25, 3 and 18-19, "*Vi mṛlīkāya te mano rathīraśvaṁnas anditaṁ gīrbhirvaruṇa sīmahi*" and "*Darśam nu viśvadarśataṁ rathamadhi kṣamī...*" and "*...Tvāmavasyurā cake,*" cf. Griffith, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 32-33.
36. *Rg.* VII, 88; cf. Griffith, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 84-85.
37. *Rg.*, VI, 20, 7; cf. Griffith, op. cit., vol. I, p. 580.
38. Some hymns where the worshipper asks the protection and shelter of gods—*Bṛhaspati*, *Rg.*, II, 23, 4, 6, 8, 11, 17; *Indra*, *Rg.*, IV, 17, 17; IV, 21; VII, 19, 7, 8, 10; VII, 21, 8; VIII, 3, 12; *Varuṇa*, VI, 3, 1; *Mitrā-varuṇa*, *Rg.*, V, 62, 9; *Indra-Varuna*, *Ṛg.*, VII, 83, 2, 3; *Viśvedevas*, *Ṛg.*, 46, 5 and 7; VI, 52, 4 and 6; X, 65; *Aśvins*, *Rg.* I, 118, 10, 11; VIII, 5, 22, 25 and 26; VIII, 62, 1, 8, 9.
39. *Ṛg.*, VII, 71, 5; cf. Griffith, op. cit., vol. II, p. 71.
40. *Ṛg.*, V, 78, 4, 5, 6, 9.
41. *Rg.*, X, 39, 3, 4, 6-9.
42. Ibid., X, 40, 7, 8.
43. Ibid., VII, 64, 3; Cf. Griffith, op. cit., Vol.II, p. 64.
44. *Ṛg.*, VII, 87; For example of Forgiveness for sins in hymns, see also, *Ṛg.*, II, 28, 1, 5; VII, 86, 4; VII, 88; VII, 89, 1, 4-5; V, 85, 8.

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45. Glorifications.
Agni, *Ṛg.*, IV, 6, 6-7; V, 1; V, 4; VI, 1.
Indra, *Ṛg.*, IV, 17, 2; VI 32, 3.
Viśvedevas, *Ṛg.*, VI, 51, 1.
Aśvins, *Ṛg.*, I, 120, 1, 3, 9; I, 182.

46. *Ṛg.*, VII, 88.

47. "*...Yuvorhi sakhyamuta va yadapyaṁ marḍikamindra varuṇa ni yacchataṁ*"; *Ṛg.*, VII, 82, 8; cf. Griffith, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 79.

48. Rubens, *Eisen Schmiede und Damonen in Indien*, 284; Dandekar gives various examples to show that there are distinct phases of relations of Viṣṇu with Indra and it was a common practice to associate any god who was to be given prominence to associate him with Indra.

He further says that the epithet 'śipiviṣṭa' given to Viṣṇu means 'The changing phallus'—he was probably connected with ancient fertility and sex rites and that must be the reason why the Vedic poets hesitate to speak of him. In later passages he is compared to a thumb which is also a symbol of the phallus. R.N. Dandekar, *A Volume of Studies in Indology*, Poona Oriental Series No. 75. *P.V. Kane Felicitation Volume*, ed. by S.N. Katre and P.K. Gode, pp. 107ff. In *Sāṁkhyana Gṛhya Sūtra* (1, 22, 13) the mantra '*Viṣṇur yoniṁ kalpayatu*' (X, 184, 1) accompanies the *garbha* ceremony, thus suggesting that he is the efficacious protector of the embryos. In the *Atharvaveda* (VII.17.4) he is clearly connected with six functions. The two epithets '*niṣiktapā*, *Ṛg*, VII.36.9 'protector of the seed' and '*summaj āni*', *Ṛg*, (I.156.2) 'facilitating easy birth' are two examples. See also G. Gonda. *Aspects of Early Visnuism*, pp. 106-08, 19.

49. *Ṛg.*, VII, 87, 7.

50. Ibid., V, 85, 8.

51. Ibid., VII, 85, 3-4.

52. Ibid,, VII, 85, 6.

53. Ibid., VII, 87, 7.

54. Ibid., 25, 3.

55. Ibid., IVII,

56. D.C. Sircar, *Studies in the Religious Life in Ancient and Medieval India.* cf. 'Vedic Viṣṇu and the *Bhakti* Cult'; J. Gonda traces the Vedic roots of many later associations with Viṣṇu, without negating non-Vedic influences, cf., *Aspects of Early Visnuism*, pp.175 & 123.

56A. *Padma Tantra*, IV, 2.88.

57. Cf. "*Yaḥ pūrvyāya vedhase navīyase*
sumajjānaye viṣṇave dadāśati,
So jātamasya mahato mahibravat
Sedu śravobhiryujyaṁ cidabhyasat", *Ṛg.* I, 156, 2.

He who presents (offerings) to Viṣṇu, the ancient, the creator, the recent, the self born, he who celebrates the graet birth of that mighty one, he verily possessed of abundance, attains (the station) that is to be sought (by all). (Wilson).

"*Tamu stotāraḥ pūrvyaṁ yathāvid*
ṛtasya garbhaṁ januṣā pipartana,
āsya jānanto nāma cidvivaktana
mahaste viṣṇo sumatiṁ bhajāmahe",
Ṛg. I, 156, 3.

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Him have you satisfied, singers of your own accord, ancient Viṣṇu, since you know him to be the germ of sacrifice; cognizant of his greatness, celebrate his name; may we, o Viṣṇu, enjoy thy favour.

"*Pratatte adya śipiviṣṭa nāmā-*
ryaḥ śaṁsāmi vayunāni vidvān,
taṁ tvā gṛṇāmi tavasamatavyān-
kṣayantaṁ asya rajasaḥ parāke".
Ṛg. VII, 100, 5.

Resplendent Viṣṇu, I, the master of the offering, knowing the objects that are to be known, glorify today thy name: I who am feeble, praise thee who are powerful, dwelling in a remote region of this world". For *Śipiviṣṭa*, cf., Gonda, op. cit., p. 106.

58. Cf. Gonda, op. cit., pp. 60ff; See also, Gonda, *Visnuism and Saivism*, pp. 7-8; Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 39.
59. Though D.C. Sircar sees the germ of sectarian religion in the Vedas, yet it must not be forgotten that he believes bhakti to be an un-Aryan concept gradually adopted by the Aryo-non-Aryan population of the country. Aryan and non-Aryan blood became mixed in several centuries (1400-1000 B.C.) covered by the composition of the *Ṛgvedic* hymns, and he believes the Vedic religion was sacrificial and essentially different from that of later *bhakti*. His views have been commented upon by J.N. Banerjea. cf. *Pauranic and Tantric Religion*, p. 19; Gonda accepts the possibility of non-Aryan influences, cf. Gonda, *Aspects of Early Visnuism*, pp. 123 and 175.
60. Cf. Gonda, *Visnuism and Saivism*, pp. 17-18.
61. *Ṛg.*, X, 136.
62. J.N. Banerjea, *Pauranic and Tantric Religions*, pp. 72-73.
63. *Ṛg.*, X, 151; cf., Griffith, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 592.
64. *Ṛg.*, V, 43, 6; cf. Griffith, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 508, fn. 6.
65. *Ṛg.*, VI, 52, 2.
66. "*Anukūlasya sankalpaḥ Pratikūlasya varjanaṁ Rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāsaḥ Goprtrtvaraṇam tathā, Ātmanikṣepa-kārapaṇya sadvidyāt saraṇāgatiḥ*". *Ahirbudhnya Samhita, Infra.* p. 217.
67. *Supra*, pp. 20-22.
68. See, fn. 38.
69. "*Pra maṁhiṣṭhāya bṛhate bṛhadraye satyaśusmāya tavase matim bhare, Apāmiva pravaṇe yasya durdharaṁ rādho viśvayu śavase apāvṛtaṁ*", *Ṛg.*, I, 57, 1,
70. "*Yamagne manyase rayiṁ sahasāvan amartya tāmā no vāiasātaye vi vo made yajñeṣu citramā bharā vivakṣase*". ibid., x, 21 4.
71. "*Kā te astyarankṛtiḥ sūktaiḥ kadā nūnaṁ te maghavan dāśemā, Viśvā matīra tatane tvāyādhā ma Indra śṛṇava havema*". ibid., VII, 29, 3.
72. "*Kvasya te Rudra mṛḷayākurhasto yo asti bheṣajo jalāṣāh*". *Apabhartā rapaso daivyasyābhī nu ma vṛṣabha cakṣamīthāḥ*". ibid., II, 33, 7.
73. "*Mūṣo na śiśnā vyadanti mādhyaḥ stotāraṁ te śatakrato, ḥakṛtsu no maghavannindra mṛlāyā adha piteva no bhava*". ibid., X, 33, 3.
74. M.R. Sharma, *Bhakti ka Vikas*, pp. 157-163.
75. "*Pravo mahe mandamānāyandhaso arcā viśvanarāva viśvābhuve, Indrasya yasya sumakham saho mahi śravo 'nṛmṇām ca rodasī saparyataḥ*", ibid., X, 50, 1.

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76. *Atharavaveda*, X. 7, 32.
77. "*Tvāmagne manīṣiṇastvāṁ hinvanti cittibhiḥ tvāṁ vardhantu no giraḥ*", *Ṛg.*, VIII. 44, 19.
78. "*Tvāvato hīndra kratve asmi tvāvato avituh sūra rātau. Viśvedahāni tasviṣīve ugraṁ okaḥ kṛṇuśva harivo no mārdhīḥ*", ibid., VII, 26, 4.
79. "*So tyam no agne avamo bhavoti nedsiṭho asyā uṣaso vyuṣṭhau. Ava yakṣva no varuṇaṁ rarāṇo vīhi mṛḷīkaṁ suvaho na edhi*". *Ṛg.*, IV, 1 5.
80. "*Na ghā tvadrigapa veti me manastve itkāmam puruhūta śiśraya, Rājeva dasma ni sadoadhi barhiṣyasmintsu some vapānamstu te*". ibid., X, 43, 2.
81. Agni as a friend—*Ṛg.*, III, Hymns—1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 18; IV, VIII, 19, 21.
Indra as a friend—III, 57, 2; IV, 23, 5-6; IV, 25, 1-2; IV, 29, 2;
Viśvedevas as friend—VI, 50, 7; VII, 60, 7; VII, 37, 5;
Aśvins as friend—VIII, 72, 2.
See also *supra*, fn. 34 and 35, pp. 17-18.
82. "*Sanāyuvo namasā navyo arkairvasūyavo matayo dasma dadruh patiṁ na patnīruṣatīruṣantam spṛśanti tvā śavasāvan manīṣāḥ*", *Ṛg.*, I, 62, 11.
83. "*Ko nānāma vacasā somvāya manāyurvā bhavati vasta uṣrāḥ. Ka Indrasva yujyaṁ kaḥ sakhitvaṁ ko bhrātram vasti kavaye ka ūti*", ibid., IV, 25, 2.
84. "*Ime hi te brahmakṛtaḥ sute saca madhau na makṣāḥ asate Indre kāmaṁ jaritāro vasūyavo rathe na padam dadhuḥ.*" ibid., VII, 32, 2.
85. Yaduvamshi, *Śaiva Mata*, p. 16.
86. *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, I, 2, 7.
87. Macnicol says that we can dimly trace throughout the *Brāhmaṇas* indications that behind the screen of formalism and ceremonial there was a twofold process of religious growth, the fruits of which were to declare themselves at a later period. On the one hand, there was an intellectual development from which sprang the Upaniṣads. On the other hand, the presence of a devout spirit, emotional and popular, rather than reflective, can also be seen; this is only seen later in some sections of the *Mahābhārata*. Macnicol says further that, even in this early time Viṣṇu was associated with theistic devotion concerning a place of eminence, apparently, only because of the story of *satra* organized by him. But in *Brāhmaṇas* he is said to be the sacrifice and the sacrifice may well be the utterance of a deep desire for fellowship with God. Thus a certain amount of obscurity surrounds Him which gives Him mystery which is necessary for a god who is supreme. He is also connected with hopes and fears of an immortal life. cf. Macnicol, *Indian Theism from the Vedic to the Mohammadan Period*, p. 31.
88. The second part of the *Kena Upaniṣad* shows that Brahma is the one power behind all the Gods. Thus the sense of divine majesty. Even the gods are nothing.
89. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.*, In the dialogue between Drpta Bālaki of Garga clan and Ajātaśatru Gārgya says in the end that he meditates on the person who is in the self. Ajataśatru says that he meditates on him as self-possessed—even his offering becomes self-possessed who meditates on him. The words '*Sohamasmi*', which occur in so many places refer to a form of worship in which the worshipper contemplates the immanent God as one with himself, e.g., the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.*, V, 15th *Brāhmaṇa*: prayer to āditya by a dying person. In these verses he who dwells in the sun is one with the light is one's deepest nature.
90. "*Sarvaṁ khalvidaṁ brahma*", *Chāndogya Up.*, III, 14, 1.

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91. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.*, Ch. I, 1, 2.
92. "*Sarvasya śaraṇam bṛhat*", *śvetāśvatara Up.* III, 17.
93. "*Janānām hṛdaye sannivisṭaḥ*", *Ibid.* III, 13.
94. *Māṇḍūkya Up.*, VI.
95. *Kaṭha Up.*, I, 2, 12; See also, "*Nityo nityānām cetānaś centanānāṁ eko bahūnaṁ yo vidadhāti kāmān. Tam ātmastham yenupaśyanti dhīrastesāṁ sukhaṁ śāsvatam netareṣām*", *Śvetāśvatara Up.*, VI, 12-13.
96. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.*, III, 9, 1-10.
97. Opinion is divided whether *Śvetāśvatara* ought to be considered a sectarian document or not. According to R.G. Bhandarkar, it is of a non-sectarian character. He says that, though the Upaniṣads contains the theism of the Upaniṣadic period in its most mature form with also a personal God, yet the attributes of a personal God are given in very general terms and He is referred to by the non-sectarian name *Deva*. Though often that *Deva* is identified with Rudra, Śiva, Īśāna, etc. there is no indication that these names have been given for the purpose of raising Rudra-Siva to supreme Godhead to the exclusions of other gods. The names Rudra and Śiva were used since He was invested with a personality acknowledged by all. In later times this text is quoted by all sects and so it cannot be a sectarian document. cf. R.G. Bhandarkar, *Vaisnavism, Saivism and Other Minor Religious Sects*, p. 157. But writers like A.P. Karmarkar believe it to be a sectarian document. He traces the origin of Saivism right from the Indus Valley period and says that in the light of this the Vedic Rudra looks like an absolutely different personality, and hence there is no abrupt rise in the sect, when it promulgates the doctrine of a monotheistic God. Even the *Purāṇas* mention *śvetāśvatara* as a *mahāpāśupata* which goes to prove that the Upanisad must have a sectarian *Pāśupata* document. See, A.P. Karmarkar, *The Religion of India*, vol. I, p. 265.
98. *Śvetāśvatara Up.*, 1, 10.
99. Ibid., 1, 12.
100. Ibid., 3, 2. This is the threefold function of the Lord as the creator, preserver and destroyer of the world. This idea is also met with in the *Taittirīya Up.* (belonging to School of *Yajurveda*). In its third section (*Bhṛguvalli*) Bhrgu is taught by Varuṇa the definition of Brahman—as that from which the origin, continuance and the dissolution of the world comes, which is of Īśvara—who is the world creating, world sustaining and the world dissolving God.

    The fourth chapter of the *Śvetāśvatara Up.*, gives a graphic destroyer of the universe. See, *Śvetāśvatara Up.*, IV, 10; IV, 12; IV. 14; IV. 15; IV 17.
101. *Ibid.*, 3, 3.
102. *Śvetāśvatara Up.*, III, 4. In some of the other Upaniṣads also the impersonal *brahman* and his other form as personal Īsvara both are recognised e.g. *Taittirīya Up.* In the *śikṣavallī* section it is indicated that *aum* is both the symbol of impersonal *brahman* and personal Īsvara. *Kena Up.* (belonging to *Sāmaveda*) deals both with brahman (verse part) and *Īśvara* (prose part).

    Īśopaniṣad (belonging to the *Vājasaneyī* School of the *Yajurveda*). It is interested not no much in the *parabrahma* as in the Absolute in relation with the world—*Parameswara*. In the famous lines—*Īśavāsyaṁ idaṁ sarvaṁ...*" the supreme is viewed not as absolute *brahman* but as the cosmic Lord, *Praśna Up.* (belonging to the Atharvaveda). The sound *aum* is both the higher and lower brahman, Therefore, with this support alone does the mere man reach the one or the other.

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Māṇḍūkya Up. (belonging to the *Atharvaveda*)—Four quarters of the self or *brahman—vaiśvānara, Taijasa, Prājña* and *Turīya.* According to Sankara (Sankara's commentary on this *Upaniṣad* and Gaudapada's Karikas on this *Upaniṣad*)—when it is viewed as the cause of the world it is called *Prājña* and when it is in its absolute aspects apart from the phenomenal relationship—it called *Turīya.*

Śankara on Gaudapāda's Kārikā. The *Upaniṣad* says for *Prājña*—"This is the lord of all, this is the knower of all, this is the beginning, the end of beings". For *Turīya*—"This is the self which is the nature of *aum* in regard to its elements. The elements are quarters namely the letters"—*a u m.*"

Dr. Radhakrishnan says that this is the first time in the history of thought that the distinction between the Absolute and God, Brahman and Īśvara is elaborated. Gaudapada writes about *aum*—the sacred syllable. "*Aum* is verily the lower brahman and the higher brahman". cf. Radhakrishnan, *The Principal Upaniṣads*, pp. 697, 703.

103. *Śvetāśvatara Up.*, III, 7.
104. ibid., III,8; *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.*, II, 3, 6; The form of this person is like the saffron coloured robe, like white wool, like the *indragopa* insect, like a flame of fire, like a white lotus, like a sudden flash of lightening. This person who consists of the mind is of the nature of light is within the heart like a grain of rice or of barley. cf. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.*, V, 6, 1.
105. *Śvatāśvatara Up.*, II, 17.
106. ibid., III, 9.
107. ibid., III, 10.
108. ibid., III, 11.
109. ibid., III, 19.
110. ibid., III, 21.
111. *Varṇa* may perhaps means 'description'.
112. *Śvetaśvatara Up.*, IV, 1.
113. ibid., IV, 9-10.
114. According to R.D. Ranade *Śvetāśvatra* was written at a time when the Sānkhya and the Vedānta were yet intermixed. The Sānkhya had not yet lost its God who is described as ruling the *Pradhāna*, while the Vedanta had not yet definitely had its *māyā*, a mere metamorphosis of the Sānkhya *prakrti.* The three *guṇas* (as in IV, 5) were yet the common property of both the Sānkhya and the Vedānta, having had their origin as far back as the *Chāndogya Up.* For a different view, See G.C. Pande; *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism.* pp. 305-09.
115. *Śvetāśvatara Up.*, I, 8.
116. ibid., IV, 16.
117. ibid., V, 4-5.
118. ibid., IV, 21. One is reminded of the prayer to Āditya by the dying person in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.*, V. 15th Brāhmaṇa. He prays to Pūṣan to spread forth its rays and gather its radiant light so that he might behold his lovely form.
119. *Śvetāśvatara Up.*, IV, 13.
120. ibid., VI, 13.
121. ibid., VI, 11.
122. ibid., VI, 14.

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123. *Śvetaśvatara Up.*, VI. 15.
124. ibid.,.VI, 23.
125. ibid., III, 20.
126. ibid., VI, 21.
127. *Kena Up.*, IV, 3.
128. *Kaṭha Up.*, I, 2, 20.
129. ibid., I, 2, 22.
130. *Muṇḍaka Up.*, III Munda, 2nd Khand, 3.
131. *Chāndogya Up.*, VI, 8, 7.
132. ibid., VI, 14, 2.
133. *Kaṭha Up.*, II. 3, 12-13.
134. *Praśna Up.*, I praśna, 2.
135. *Śvetāśvatara Up.*, VI, 23.
136. *Muṇḍaka Up.*, II, 2, 3.
137. *Śvetāśvatara Up..*, I, 14; These lines imply that one should meditate on the Godhead and bring him out of the recertes of our heart.
138. *Chāndogya Up.*, VII, 1, 3.
139. *Śankara Bhāṣya* on *Chāndogha Upaniṣad*, I, 1, 1.
140. *Kena Up.*, IV, 6.
141. *Kaṭha Up.*, I, 2, 13.
142. *Śvetāśvatara Up.*, VI, 5.
143. *Pañcadaśī*, 9. 83-84.
144. Brahmanandin is one of the oldest Vedantins. Rāmānuja quotes him and says that—*Upāsanā* is nothing but constant remembrance—*Upāsanaṁ syād dhruvanusmṛtīrdarśānāṅ nirvacanācca*", *Śri Bhāśya*, 34.
145. *Vedārtha-Samoraha*, p. 143.
146. ibid., p. 147.
147. *Nārada Bhakti Sūtra*, 9.
148. "*Vedānām dhyāna—viśrāntaṁ dhyānaṁ śrāntaṁ dhruvānusmṛmrtau Sā ca drasṭṛtvamabhyeti dṛṣṭir bhaktītvamṛcchati*". *Śatadūṣaṇī*, p. 136.
149. "*Atha ye śataṁ prajāpatiloka ānandaḥ.....*".
Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up., IV, 3, 33.
150. *Chāndogya Up.*, VII, 29, 1.
151. ibid., VII, 26, 1.
152. ibid., VII, 25, 2.
153. *Taittirīya Up.*, II, 4, 1.
154. ibid., II, 8, 1.
155. ibid., III, 6, 1.
156. *Tattirīya Up.*, III, 10, 5-6.
157. *Muṇḍaka Up.*, II, Munda, 2nd Khand, 11.
158. Ranade, *A Constructive survey of Upanisadic Philosophy*, p. 45.
159. "*Yasmin sarvāṇi bhūtanyātmaivabhūd vijādataḥ*".
Īśāvāsya Up., VII.
159a. Macnicol, op. cit. pp. 49ff.

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160. "*Sa yā evametadrājanaṁ devatāsu protaṁ vedaitasameva Devatānaṁ salokatāṁ sārṣṭitaṁ sāyujyaṁ gacchati*".
Chāndogya Up., II, 20, 2.

161. "*Etajñeyaṁ nityamevātmā saṁsthaṁ*
nataḥ paraṁ veditavyaṁ hi kiñcit
Bhoktā bhogyaṁ preritāraṁ ca matvā
sarvaṁ proktaṁ trividhaṁ brahmametat".
śvetāśvatara Up., I, 12.

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3

Bhakti in the Epics

I

Place of the Rāmāyaṇa in the development of bhakti

Ancient bardic literature preserved the legends of semi-divine rulers and heroes, of which the legend of Rāma—an Ikṣvāku hero of the solar dynasty is one of the best known. We have in the Upaniṣads and the *Gītā* the tradition of rulers as possessing secret wisdom.[1] *Stūpas* over bodies of *cakravartins* were also common.[2] From what we know from the *vyūha* doctrine of the worship of five *vīras* or heroes, it would not be surprising if the Īkṣvāku heroes might also have been worshipped.

Although Vālmīki does not depict Rāma as an incarnation in the sense in which the *Gītā* depicts Kṛṣṇa, nevertheless we should not think of the *Rāmāyaṇa* simply as an invented tale about an ordinary mortal. Vālmīki draws his story from the repertory of ancient heroic legends relating to a famous prince of Ikṣvāku house. Around these legends have gathered the notions of semi-divine heroes who were revered and were the objects of worship. They were not only full of prowess but also of wisdom. The legend of Rāma was further unique in exemplifying his moral qualities, of devotion to duty and personal loyalty and fortitude, even if Vālmīki chose to emphasize the aspect of ethical idealism and adventure befitting the context of a heroic epic. Nevertheless even within the *Rāmāyaṇa* it is quite clear that not only Rāma but also Sītā and Hanumān are not depicted as ordinary human beings. but have special connections with the gods. It is not, therefore, surprising that elements of miracle and later on of apotheosis should have been introduced into the revised and enlarged *Rāmāyaṇa*. Since the individual poetical nature of the *Rāmāyaṇa* did not permit too much change, new versions of the Rāma legend came to be composed to bring it in line with the newly developing concept of *avatāra*..

The Origin and Growth of the Rāmāyaṇa

According to Weber the ancient heroic legend of Rāma is preserved in *Daśaratha Jātaka*. But we know for certain now that the story of Rāma in *Daśaratha Jātaka* was written in Ceylon centuries after the epic of Vālmīki on the basis of oral tradition. It has a very twisted version of the story of Rāma.[3]

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According to Jacobi there are two parts of the theme of *Rāmāyaṇa*, the first part concerns itself with legendary events relating to a human hero and the second with the killing of Rāvaṇa. The second part is held to be a later version of the Vedic myth of Indra-Vṛtra conflict. The reference in *Taitrirīya Brāhmaṇa* of *Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda* has no connection whatsoever with the Sītā of *Rāmāyaṇa*. Similarly, in the *Ṛgveda* divinity is bestowed upon Sītā or furrow.[4] According to Jacobi the character of Rāma is drawn from Indra, that of Sītā from the Vedic Sītā referred to above and Rāvaṇa from Vṛtrāsura. The abduction of Sītā is taken from the abduction of the cows and Rāvaṇa's killing is taken from the killing of Vṛtrāsura.[5]

Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sen[6] opines that Vālmīki constructed his story out of three independent legends—those of Daśaratha, Rāvaṇa and Hanumāna.[7] Father Camel Bulcke[8] accepts the possibility of the story of *Rāmāyaṇa* having a legendary basis with historical points of contact and finds fault with the assumption that the *Rāmāyaṇa* was composed out of independent stories about Rāvaṇa, etc. But if we consider rationally the two views are not contradictory. Vālmīki, it seems did draw inspiration from the ancient heroic legends influenced by myths, though they might not necessarily have been of independent origin in different cycles.[9]

It is generally recognized that Bāla-kāṇḍa and Uttara-kāṇḍa were later interpolations in the original *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmīki.[10] Nor can we rule out the possibility of interpolated parts even in the original sections written by Vālmīki—from the Ayodhya-kāṇḍa to Yuddha-kāṇḍa.[11] The style of the Bāla-kāṇḍa resembles the style of Uttara-kāṇḍa. Most of the stories which are common in *Puraṇās* are found here—Sagara-kathā, Samudra-manthana, Viśvāmitra-kathā, etc. and are written in the style of the *Purāṇas*, whereas from the Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa no such paurāṇic stories are to be found. On the other hand, some of the facts mentioned in the Uttara-kāṇḍa cannot be correlated with those of Bāla-kāṇḍa e.g., in the Bāla-kāṇḍa Urmilā is mentioned as the bride of Lakṣmaṇa whereas in the Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa no mention of Urmilā is found. In the Araṇya-kāṇḍa Lakṣmaṇa is said to be unmarried. Again, the *phalaśruti* at the end of Yuddha-kāṇḍa itself points to the fact that Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* ended there. In the first *sarga* of Bāla-kāṇḍa is found a list of chapters which only mentions the contents of chapters occurring from Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa to Yuddha-kāṇḍa. Later the inadequacy of this must have been realized and another list was introduced which has the contents of Bāla-kāṇḍa as well as of Uttara-kāṇḍa. The style of Uttara-kāṇḍa is different from other *kāṇḍas*. Only after the story of Rāvaṇa and Hanumān, the story of Rāma progresses. But even then the story lacks a clear flow due to the occurrence of sub-stories which have no direct connection with the main theme. Sītā-tyāga, Śatrughna-carita, Śambūka-vadha, Rāma's aśvamedha, Sita's disappearance do not have a special bearing on each other. Besides this, the full-fledged concept of *avatāra* in the Uttara-kāṇḍa goes to prove that it was added later. The first *kāṇḍa* similarly treats Rām as divine. Sometimes contradictory incidents are also

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found, e.g. at the end of the Yuddha-kāṇḍa Sugrīva and others are mentioned as going away. But this is again repeated in the Uttara-kāṇḍa.

Regarding the interpolated chapters in the original Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa* itself, it has been suggested that the miraculous or fantastic events (though they are very few) may be held as late and interpolated since balance and naturalness are the main characteristics of Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa.[12]

If we consider these views and arguments carefully it would seem that though Bāla-kāṇḍa and Uttara-kāṇḍa might certainly be late and not form an original part of Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*, this does not prove that they themselves did not have their origin in a repertory of ancient legends. Rāvaṇa's story as well as the story of Hanumān occur in the Uttara-kāṇḍa. The Uttara-kāṇḍa story of Hanumān is a detailed version of the story of Hanumān found in the Kiśkindhā-kāṇḍa which forms a part of the Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa. The miraculous element and the divinity which is conferred on Hanumān is also seen in the last chapters of Kiṣkindhā-kāṇḍa, the whole of Sundara-kāṇḍa, and also in Yuddha-kāṇḍa and D.C. Sen's view about the Hanumān legend having its roots in antiquity is not improbable. According to many scholars Hanuman is a Sanskrit translation of the Dravida word *An-manti* which means a *nara-kapi*. Pargiter[13] believes that Vṛṣākapi and Hanumān were forms of some ancient Dravida deity. Others take Vṛṣākapi as Varāha. Sri Chattopadhyaya believes that Vṛṣākapi was a sun god whose symbol was Varāha.[14] But even if it had association with Varāha it is quite possible that later on it came to mean the *nara-kapi* and there is no reason to believe, as Bulcke says, that *Ṛgvedic* Vṛṣākapi had any connection with the Dravidian civilization considering the fact that much about early Dravidian civilization is shrouded in mystery. Even though we do not take into consideration the word Vṛṣākapi, it is not unusual for an epic writer to borrow from ancient legends.

The hypothesis about the miraculous and supernatural parts in the original Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* being late does not hold much ground. The argument is based on the fact that a sense of balance and naturalness is found throughout the epic. But we must remember that the lofty theme of an epic includes both the human and what goes beyond the human. Consequently instances of the miraculous are not necessarily subsequent interpolations. They form an intrinsic fibre of the epic genre itself.

The seeds of the concept of avatāra in the original Rāmāyaṇa

In the beginning of the Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa itself in the first *sarga* Rāma is considered as an *avatāra*—

Sa hi devairudīrṇasya Rāvaṇasya vadhādibhiḥ
Arthito mānuṣe loke yajñe viṣṇuḥ sanātanaḥ[15]

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This *śloka* is found in all the readings of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and is regarded by scholars as interpolaled later. Bulcke in fact regards thirty five *ślokas* of the first chapter in Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa as interpolated.[16] Even if we regard this as interpolated, there are many other examples which show the supernatural element. In the Araṇya-kāṇḍa while describing Rāma's valour it is said that Rāma is capable of reconstructing the whole of the universe even after destroying it—

Samhṛtya vā punarlokān virkameṇa mahāyaśāḥ
Śaktah śreṣṭhaḥ sa puruṣaḥ sraṣṭuṁ punarapi prajāḥ.[17]

(This reference is found in the southern reading). Lakṣmaṇa talks about the divine and the human valours of Rāma—

Divyaṁ ca mānuṣaṁ caivamātmanaśca parākramaṁ[18]

The incident of Śabarī is itself one which is beyond the ordinary, Śabarī is a great *tapasvinī* who after taking Rāma's permission enters the sacred fire and her body becomes effulgent and divine and she goes to heaven.[19] She also calls Rāma a *devavara*—

"*Adya me saphalaṁ taptaṁ svargaścaiva bhaviṣyati*
tvayi devavare Rāma pūjite puruṣarṣabha"[20]

Rāma's being more than an ordinary human being is hinted in this chapter. He acts like a spiritual guide. He inquires of Śabarī about her spiritual progress. He asks her whether she had acquired control over all the obstructions to spiritual progress, and if she was noticing any progress in her *tapasyā*—

"*Kaccitte nirjitā vighnāḥ kaccitte vardhate tapaḥ*
Kaccitte niyataḥ kopaāhāraśca tapodhane"[21]

Śabarī tells Rāma that she was purged by his auspicious glance and would go to the *akṣaya loka* by his *prasāda*—

"*Tavāhaṁ cakṣuṣā saumya pūtā saumyena mānada*
Gamiṣyāmykṣyānllokānstvatprasādādarindama"[22]

We know that an important function of the *avatāra* is to act as a spiritual guide also, and hence we get a glimpse of him as such. Even though it cannot be believed that Vālmīki intended to depict Rāma as an incarnation like the full-fledged *avatāra* Kṛṣṇa, yet it cannot be denied that the semi-divine hero Rama, acting also as a spiritual guide in this passage, certainly shows a stage in the development of the concept of Rāma towards a more perfect *avatāra* hood.

The episode of Śabarī also shows that by this time devotion and austerities being practised by the outcastes were not regarded as strange—

"*Evamuktaḥ sa dharmātmā śabaryā śabarīmidaṁ*
Rāghavaḥ prāha vijñāne tām nityamabahiṣkṛtāṁ"[23]

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In Araṇya-kaṇḍa 64th *sarga* Rāma says that he will bring back his Sītā even though he has to fight the *yakṣas*, *rākṣasas* and *kinnaras*, that he would fill the sky with his arrows and stop all movements in the universe, he would even confront and defeat the gods. He would certainly destroy all the three *lokas*.[24] This is believed only as a poetical exageration. But knowing Rāma's other perfections it is not unusual to think that by such verses Vālmīki might have meant to convey the supreme valour of Rāma which was beyond ordinary human valour.

In the Kiṣkindhā-kāṇḍa Hanumān is seen changing his form as he pleases and when he meets Rāma for the first time Rāma wonders how he who had had no instruction in the *Vedas* could talk so well and was so learned in grammar.[25] The mystery is explained later,[26] when Jāmbavān tells Hanumān the mystery of his birth. Hence with regard to Hanumān miraculous supernatural elements are used without much hesitation.

The Sundara-kāṇḍa is full of Hanumān's valour and prowess which shows more than a mere human element. He flies over the sea, confronts Surasā by varying his form. The same character is preserved in the Yuddhakāṇḍa also when he saves the lives of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa by getting various medicinal herbs for them in no time.

In the Sundara-kāṇḍa Hanumān also gives hints regarding the semi-divine quality of Rāma. He tells Rāvaṇa that Śri Rāma is capable of destroying the whole world and then reconstructing it, that his valour matches that of Viṣṇu and supersedes that of *devatās*, *asuras*, human beings, *yakṣas*, snakes, *vidyādharas*, *nāgas*, *gandharvas*, *mṛgas*, *siddhas*, *kinnaras*, birds and all other beings. The four faced Brahmā, Rudra and even Indra cannot defeat Rāma.[27]

Many references hinting at the divinity of Rāma are found in the Yuddhakāṇḍa. One of Rāvaṇa's ministers advises him not to fight against Rāma saying—

"*Langhanaṁ ca samudrasya darśanaṁ ca Hanūmataḥ*
Vadhantu rakṣasāṁ yuddhe kaḥ kuryānmānuṣo yudhi."[28]

Sugrīva tells Vibhīṣaṇa that Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa are seated on Garuḍa—

"*Garuḍādhiṣṭhitāvetāvubhau Rāghavalakṣmaṇau*"[29]

At the time of *agni-parīkṣā* the gods pray to Rāma in the form of Viṣṇu. Sītā and Lakṣmī are considered as one.

Kartā sarvasya lokasya śreṣṭho iñānavidām vibhuḥ
Upekṣate kathaṁ sītāṁ patantīṁ havyavāhane
Kathaṁ devagaṇa-śreṣṭhātmānaṁ nāvabudhyase.[30]

He is considered as Rudra, Nārāyaṇa and also parabrahma. Even if this be regarded as a later addition—as it has Rāma as a complete *avatāra*—it shows a direction of development out of a suitable matrix obtaining originally.

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Hence we see that in the original Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa* the character of Rāma which emerges is not so much that of an ordinary human being but that of a perfect man and his semi-divine character is also hinted at in a subtle way, keeping in balance the natural and the miraculous instincts and preserving the essential character of the epic. Instances showing him on the way to *avatārahood* can be gleaned from the chapter of Śabarī where Rāma emerges as a spiritual guide also.

The word and concept of bhakti

The word 'bhakti' in this context is used as meaning strong loyalty towards elders, reverence for those capable of it, loving adoration of a wife for a husband, etc. In fact bhakti here is connected with all the varied manifestations of love. While leaving for the forests Rāma tells Lakṣmaṇa to stay in Ayodhyā and look after the elders. Doing this he would be showing his bhakti towards Rāma—

"*Evaṁ mayi ca te bhaktirbhaviṣyati sudarśitā*".[31]

Towards a husband—

"*Evaṁ mayā mahābhāgadṛṣṭā janakanandinī*
Ugreṇa tapasā yuktā tvadbhaktyā puruṣarṣabha."[32]

Hanumān while talking to Sītā in Sundara-kāṇḍa says that Rāma is worshipped among the people because of his superior qualities and then goes at length to praise him—

"*Arciṣmānarcitotyarthaṁ brahmacaryavratī sthitaḥ*
Sādhūnāmupakārajñah pracārojñaścā karmaṇāṁ."[33]

Already in Sundara-kāṇḍa Hanumān's bhakti for Sri Rāma (which was quoted as ideal bhakti among later writers) becomes very obvious. He refers to Rāma as his guru and declares his love for him—

"*Ichāmi tvāṁ samānetumadyaiva Raghunandinā*
Gurusnehena bhaktyā ca nānyathā tadudāhṛtaṁ".[34]

After Rāvaṇa is killed in the battle, Hanumān goes to tell Sītā the news and she asks him to demand a boon from her. He says that after hearing such loving words from her he did not want anything else. By Rāma's victory he felt he had got everything—

Bhartuḥ priyahite yukte bhar turvjayakānkṣiṇī
Singdhamevamvidhaṁ vākyaṁ tvamevarhasyaninindite.[35]
Arthaśca mayā prāpto devarājyādayo guṇāh
Hataśatruṁ Vijayinaṁ Rāmaṁ paśyāmi susthitaṁ.[36]

Hence we see that the basic elements of bhakti and an immature form of *avatāravāda* and Rāma's semi-divine character were present potentially in the original Vālmīki's *Rāmāyana*. Bāla-kāṇḍa and Uttara kāṇḍa show a development

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of these factors, and Uttara-kāṇḍa a more categorical way of expressing them. Let us examine the evelopment of bhakti in these two *kāṇḍas* and the various influences which helped in the process.

Avatārahood is mentioned twice in the Bāla-kāṇḍa. It is first mentioned in the chapter on Putryesthi Yajña[37] when all the *devatās* come to the sacrifice of Ṛṣyaśṛṅga and appeal to Brahmā to find a way out for killing Rāvaṇa who had become a menace to everyone and could be only killed by a mortal and so Brahmā suggests that Viṣṇu take the form of a mortal and perform this task which no ordinary mortal could do. Hence the obvious purpose of *avatāra* is clearly mentioned here. At another place Paraśurāma says that he regards Rāma as Viṣṇu and that he felt no shame in being defeated by him.[38]

It has been suggested that though Bāla-kāṇḍa is itself late and interpolated these two examples are still later, as in the rest of Bāla-kāṇḍa *avatārahood* is not stated so obviously. On the other hand, there are passages in the Bāla-kāṇḍa which suggest that in the period of the writing of the main Bāla-kāṇḍa, Rāma was not a full-fledged *avatāra*. In the first chapter Rāma is only compared to Viṣṇu—*Viṣṇunā sadṛśo vinaye*[39] and in the end it is stated that Rāma will go to *brahmaloka* after his *līlā*.[40] In the Uttara-kāṇḍa Rāma is regarded as an *avatāra* in many chapters, viz. 8, 17, 27, 30, 51, 76, 98, 104, 106, 110, 111, 137, etc. When sītā enters the earth and Rāma says that he would get her back Brahmā says that he should not forget that he is Viṣṇu and Sītā is forever his and has gone to his *paramadhāma* where he will meet her afterwards.

We have already mentioned the view of some scholars regarding the origin of Sītā. It does not seem probable that the Sītā of the *Rāmāyaṇa* has any connection with the Sītā of *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* of *Kṛṣṇayajurveda* and it is very doubtful if Sītā as furrow personified in the *Ṛgveda* has any connection with the Sītā of the epic. And yet the character of Sītā emerges as a mysterious one. Even as early as Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa she is said to have been born out of the earth.[41] This tradition about her birth is maintained throughout the epic. She is called *ayonijā* many times. At the end of the Yuddha-kāṇḍa she enters fire and comes out of it and the gods proclaim her purity. In the Uttara-kāṇḍa when Rāma again asks her to undergo another *agni parīkṣā*, the earth creeks in order to prove her purity and she goes inside it. Even though these passages might be late, they certainly show a tradition which must have regarded Sītā as semi-divine, or at least more than only an ordinary mortal. Hanumān whose bhakti is quoted as the ideal one later, is also seen revering her. As seen before[42] he declares love for his guru Rāma and bhakti for Sītā[43] and later, after Rāvaṇa is killed and Sītā asks him to demand a boon for himseif, he says he was contented with her loving words and by Rāma's victory he felt he had got everything.[44]

Hence we see a development and growth of bhaktl in the original Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa*, where the basic elements of bhakti, an immature form of *avatāravāda*, the semi-divine character of Rāma and Sītā and Hanumān—are present in more than

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a suggestive form. Bāla-kāṇḍa and Uttara-kāṇḍa show a steady growth of these factors and a more obvious and a categorical way of expressing them.

By the time the Bāla-kāṇḍa and Uttara-kāṇḍa were written Vaiṣṇavism must have become very prominent. There are numerous references in the Uttara-kāṇḍa regarding Rāma as Viṣṇu. In the *Mahābhārata*, in the *Nārāyaṇīya Upākhyāna* Viṣṇu's six *avatāras* are listed as—*Varāha, Nṛsimha, Vāmana, Bhārgava Rāma, Dāśarathi Rāma* and *Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa*. In this very *Upākhyāna* at another place four types of *avatāras* are mentioned — *Varāha, Nṛsimha, Vāmana* and *manuṣyāvatāra*.

It has been asserted that Rāma-bhakti is not mentioned in the ancient Purāṇas as *Harivaṁśa* and from this is concluded that Rāma-bhakti came much later after Rāma was regarded as an *avatāra*. But even the earliest of the Purāṇas could not have been written before this period. If we take the date of Kalidāsa as between the Śungas and the Guptas it seems probable that the period of Kalidāsa was the same when the early Purāṇas must have been written and we certainly find Rāma as an *avatāra* in the works of Kalidāsa as, for example, in the *Raghuvaṁśa*.[45]

Even Kṛṣṇa does not have separate temples for himself in the Gupta times as most of the temples are those of Viṣṇu. Kṛṣṇa images are mostly depicted on wall panels. But from this we cannot conclude that Kṛṣṇa-bhakti was not widely popular by that time. It is just possible that Rāma as an *avatāra* might not have been as popular as Kṛṣṇa by that time but to conclude that Rāma-bhakti came a long time after the acceptance of Rāma as an *avatāra* does not seem logical.

There is no evidence for even temple architecture before the Gupta period. But from this fact alone we cannot conclude that there was no worship (in the sense of pūjā) before that period.

Rāma-bhakti must have received an impetus from the south Indian *āḷvārs*. In the *Nāḷayira-prabandhaṁ* especially extreme love towards Viṣṇu and his *avatāras* is seen. In the writings of Kūlśekhara *Āḷvār* Rāma-bhakti is seen in its very developed form.

Besides the emotional depiction of Rāma-bhakti and Rāma-worship, the Vaiṣṇava samhitās and Upaniṣads give a theoretical formulation of Rāma-bhakti. Though Rāmānuja has himself not written on Rāma-bhakti but in his *Śrībhāṣya* he has mentioned Rāma and Kṛṣṇa among the *avatāras*. In his religious sect *dāsya-bhakti* is formulated. Among the *Samhitas* may be mentioned *Agastya Samhitā, Bṛhadrāghava* and *Ṛāghaviya Samhitā*. The sectarian Upaniṣads showing Rāma-bhakti are *Rāma-pūrvatāpanīya, Rāmottaratāpanīya* and *Rāmarahasyopaniṣad*. All the three mention *Rama-yantra, Rama-mantra, Sītā-mantra*, etc. Rama is considered *paramapuruṣa* and Sītā as *mūlaprakṛti* in these. In the *Rāmarahasyopaniṣad, advaita bhakti* regarding Rāma is also formulated.[46]

In the other later Upaniṣads which concern Rāma, the influence of Kṛṣṇa worship is seen. *Bhagavadgītā* also had a considerable influence on Rāma-bhakti. Various other texts which were written on the basis of *Bhagavadgītā* try to establish

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the *paramabrahma* form of Rāma, e.g. *Śri Rāma Gītā*. Later on *Adhyātma-Rāmāyaṇa*, *Ānanda Rāmāyaṇa* and *Adbhuta Rāmāyaṇa* were written from an avowed metaphysical and theological point of view. The aim of *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* is to formulate Rāma-bhakti on the basis of Śaṅkarācārya's *Vedānta*. It had a great role in influencing the *Rāma-caritamānasa* later. *Ānanda Rāmāyaṇa* also has the concept of *amśāvatāra*, Hanumān is regarded as one.

Other Sects And Gods In Rāmāyaṇa

Śiva-pratiṣṭhā is found in the Yuddha-kāṇḍa but that is only in the southern reading. In the Uttara-kāṇḍa, Rāvaṇa is seen as a devotee of Śiva but it is Brahmā who emerges as a giver of boon in the end to him.

In fact Brahmā is throughout mentioned as the giver of boons, in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Rāma is often compared to Viṣṇu and Viṣṇu's *avatāra* as Vāmana is very frequently mentioned.

Similarly enough Devi worship is not seen in the original chapters.

II

BHAKTI IN THE MAHĀBHĀRATA

A host of western and modern Indian critics have described the *Mahābhārata* as "an unintelligible conglomerate of disjointed pieces without any meaning as a whole" and have repeatedly searched for the original epic by various methods of higher criticism. There can be no doubt that the *Mahābhārata* has had a long history and that it derives from many sources, contains elaborations with interpolations and that it was revised more than once. Perhaps it began as a tragic heroic epic but was later on transformed with the introduction of philosophical, legal and cult material. Nevertheless it remains true, as the greatest savant of *Mahābhārata* studies has concluded that "the epic obviously contains something — some elusive ideal — that produces this permanent and not transient quality of interest . . . . I believe we shall find in the poem itself something far greater and noble than the lost paradise of the primitive kṣatriya tale of love and war, for which the Western savants have been vainly searching, and which the Indian people had long outgrown and discarded".[47] Whether the *Mahābhārata* has a historical basis has been as much debated as the chronology of its composition.[48] The most widely accepted opinion places its composition in the present form between the 4th century B.C., and the 4th century A.D.[49] The *terminus a quo*, however, needs to be pushed back since Pāṇini and the *Āśvalāyana Gṛhya Sūtra* certainly knew some form of the epic.[50]

The *Mahābhārata* contributes to the development of the idea of bhakti in three ways: its narrative of the deeds of Kṛṣṇa and of his relationship with Arjuna exemplifies the doctrines which the *Gītā* expounds. Secondly, the *Gītā* contains the original gospel of bhakti. Thirdly, the *Mahābhārata* contains several sections

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which give expression to the ideas and sentiment of bhakti. Some as in the Sāntiparva contain even mythical and legendary accounts. But ultimately doctrines as well as myths and legends contribute to the origin and growth of bhakti.

Let us consider first the deeds of Kṛṣṇa and his relationship with Arjuna and how they exemplify the doctrine which the *Gītā* expounds.[51] Kṛṣṇa in the *Mahābhārata* appears as a multidimensional character, a fact which has struck scholars[52] and has even led some to misunderstand Kṛṣṇa completely. Hopkins, for example, goes so far as to call Kṛṣṇa deceitful and tricky, who schemes and practises every possible trick to achieve his ends.[53] Apparently, he is a paradox and a riddle.[54] 'He is a mortal and an immortal. Though his parentage is known he maintains himself to be unborn. He was killed by a hunter yet it has been claimed that he was immortal. Though he says that he regards all beings alike, he openly favours the Pāndavas, especially Arjuna and continually plots for the destruction of their enemies — the Kauravas. But if we look at this from the Indian view-point we know instinctively that these contradictions are more apparent than real. According to Sukthankar, an Indian "is not ruffled by these inconsistencies, because apparently by automatic mental adjustment he instantly reaches the plane of thought on which the mind of the poet is working. He is, as it were, furnished by nature with a bifocal stethoscopic apparatus which instantly combines the twin views of the God who has become man and man who has become God — views taken at slightly different angles into a single perfectly focussed image, of God-man and man-God with complete effect of solidarity, reality and perspective."[55]

There are many aspects of Kṛṣṇa's character which are depicted in the *Mahābhārata*. His very presence brings a sense of awe and reverence among the other characters. We see him being worshipped as early as Sabhāparva[56] on the occasion of the *Rājasūya* sacrifice organized by Yudhiṣṭhira. In the Āraṇyakaparva he is said to be a great ascetic who performed austerities on the Gandhamādana mountain, Puṣkara, Badari and Prabhāsa *Kṣetra*.[57] He is said to have been Viṣṇu and Trivikrama.[58] Similarly in the Udyogaparva, Vidura sings the glory of Kṛṣṇa to Duryodhana.[59] Elsewhere also at several places Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa are mentioned as incarnations of Nara and Nārāyaṇa.[60] V.S. Agrawal[61] expresses the opinion that these descriptions of Kṛṣṇa show distinctly a *Pāñcarātra* influence[62] especially in the Udyogaparva, where there occurs—

"*Eṣa nārāyaṇaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ phalgunastu naraḥ smṛtaḥ*
Nārāyaṇa naraścaiva sattvamekaṁ dvidhā kṛtaṁ."[63]

This point of view, he says, belongs to the Ekāntika branch of the Bhāgavatas and the worship of Nara-Nārāyaṇ in the Vedic tradition was accepted in the form of Kṛṣṇa-Arjuna worship.

"*vāsudevārjunau vīrau samavetau mahārathau*
Nara-nārāyaṇau devau pūrvadevāviti śrutiḥ."[64]

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There are other passages concerning Kṛṣṇa which may be recalled here. For example, in the Yānasandhiparva when Dhṛtarāṣṭra asks Saṁjaya how he comes to know the glory of Kṛṣṇa, Saṁjaya answers that he knows Kṛṣṇa by right knowledge and afterwards says that he worships Kṛṣṇa with the purest of *bhāvas* and follows the śāstras in worshipping him.[65] In this discussion *Ekāyana mārga* is mentioned.[66] The word 'Āgama' also occurs here,[67] that was a word used among the *Pāñcarātras* for their sacred literature.[68]

Although these descriptions might show a *Pāñcarātra* influence, they are clearly evidence of the development of Bhāgavatism and bhakti. The earliest reference to *Pāñcarātra*[69] according to scholars is already found in the *nārāyaṇīya* section of the *Mahābhārata*. The devotees of this sect could have added to these doctrines from time to time. But it is not necessary that all the passages which show Kṛṣṇa as Nārāyṇa be late. It is true that while in the *Mahābhārata* the human aspect apparently seems to be dominant and Kṛṣṇa's divinity comes out more in his wisdom than in the actual performance of miracles, yet we must not forget that the concept of *avatārahood* had become fully developed by then, as seen in the *Gītā*, and Kṛṣṇa has all the characteristics of an *avatāra* in the *Mahābhārata*. We know that though the main function of the *avatāra* is to point the way of an inherent Godhood in man, yet in this incarnation this divine nature is not seen so far in its naked splendour but is mediated by the instrumentality of humanity as he is a dual phenomenon of divinity and humanity. Hence he does not act in a completely supernatural fashion but rather assumes human foibles or sufferings to show the world that we can rise to the ultimate ideal from what we potentially are — under all our limitations. This is the position generally implied in the *Mahābhārata*.

Yet in spite of this Kṛṣṇa is not without any miracles in the *Mahābhārata*. When Draupadī was insulted in the Kaurava court and was being divested of her robes, she could do nothing but fervently pray to Hari, the protector of the weak, the Lord of the universe and chief of the Yogins. A miracle took place and every garment that was taken off her gave place to another.[70] Here is an excellent example of an *ārta bhakta* mentioned in the *Gītā*. Similarly, in the Vanaparva when the sage Durvāsā comes to the Pāṇḍavas' hermitage and Draupadī does not have any thing to offer him as all the food had been finished, she prays to Kṛṣṇa and he helps her.[71] These and some other incidents might have a relatively late origin as is suggested by the apocryphal character of Draupadī's prayer in the Sabhāparvan, but they certainly show a stage of Kṛṣṇa devotion which was quite developed.

Let us now see what relationship Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna have in this epic. We have already seen that they are regarded as the incarnations of Nārāyaṇa and Nara. The relationship of Nara and Nārāyaṇa is hinted at in an episode in the Udyogaparvan.[72] When king Dambhodbhava tried to challenge Nara and Nārāyaṇa in their hermitage at Badari, Nara threw a handful of straw at them as missiles which pierced their eyes and noses until Dambhodbhava fell at Nara's feet and begged for peace. When Nara was repelling the attack of pride in the form of King Dambhodbhava, Nārāyaṇa apparently sat looking on, apparently unmoved. V.S. Sukthankar thinks that this

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episode is a more prosaic version of the classic parable of the two birds, eternal friends, seated upon the same tree — symbol of the body — of whom one (*jīvātmā*) eats the fruits while the other (*paramātman*) sits contented, silently looking on. This Upaniṣadic parable is also intended to visualize the dual soul — human or divine — incarnated in one body.[73] Sukthankar further says that whoever Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna might be in real life, the epic poets view Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa simultaneously as the *jivātman* and the *paramātman*. He adds that this interpretation is not an attempt to rationalize the story of *Mahābhārata* but the unsophisticated Indian knows this instinctively and that the modern critic has missed the obvious because the epic is also very explicit about it. But Nara here stands for man *par excellence* — the *narottama*.[74] Besides, their relationship is that of perfect love as also seen in the *Gītā*.[75]

Besides being identified with Nārāyaṇa Vāsudeva was already identified with Viṣṇu in the *Gītā*. According to R.G. Bhandarkar, Viṣṇu in the *Gītā* is regarded as the chief of Ādityas and not as supreme Being. Besides, he says that in the *Anugītā* Kṛṣṇa explains the mystery of his twin nature to Uttaṅka and shows his Viśvarūpa to him and this is called Vaiṣṇavarūpa. Thus, it has been suggested that the identity of Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva was affected between the period of the *Gītā* and the *Anugītā*.[76] But other scholars like P. Banerjee[77] disagree. P. Banerjee says with regard to Bhandarkar's theory that the Udyogaparva, which comes before the *Anugītā* and also the *Bhagavadgītā* in the epic arrangment, identifies Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva with Viṣṇu in clear terms. This shows that the identification of Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva with Viṣṇu took place much earlier. Secondly, he says that though Viṣṇu is regarded as the God of light his original conception is as an aspect of sun God, and his solar attributes did not drop altogether even when he rose to the position of a monotheistic and supreme divinity.

Besides the *Bhagavadgītā*, a very developed bhakti is seen in the often discussed Nārāyaṇa section of the Śāntiparva in the Mahābhārata.[78] Nārada goes to Nara and Nārāyaṇa and asks him whom they worship. They tell him that they worship the Paramātman from whom everything has come forth. They tell Nārada to go to Śvetadvīpa and to observe five seekers after the spiritual life. Nārada goes to the Śvetadvīpa and there, comes to know about the devotees who were fair complexioned, clad in white garments and partaking of only that food which was free of violence. These people were engrossed in *mānasajapa*[79] and were aware of *ekānta bhāva*.[80] They did not marry but remained *brahmacārins*. They worshipped Nārāyaṇa and created the *Tantraśāstra*. Then Nārada comes to know of the story of Vasu Uparicara's sacrifice. Vasu Uparicara had organized a sacrifice in which he was the *Yajamāna*, Bṛhaspati, the chief priest, Ekata, Dvita and Trita were the chief *sadasyas*. Bṛhaspati could not have a vision of God as his mind was fixed on the *Saṁhitas* and *Brāhmaṇas* and was given to violence (*hiṁsā*) and sacrifice. Ekata, Dvita and Trita, though the sons of Brahmā and Maharṣayah, could not reach God because they had delivered themselves only to mortificatory penances for hundreds

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of years. But Vasu Uparicara whose mind was fixed on *Āraṇyakas* and Upaniṣads, who was more devoted than the others, who was the only man of real devotion in the sacrifice, could see God because he had not given himself over to *himsā*. He did not regard mortificatory penance as capable of achieving God, but it was *bhāva* or internal devotion that enabled one to see God. Hence it is neither penance nor bodily tormentation that wins God but pure *ekāntika bhakti*. Nārada returned to Nārāyaṇa. Nārāyaṇa found that *ekāntika bhakti* had germinated in him. Nārāyaṇa was satisfied with Nārada who had returned with the requisites of spiritual life. He told Nārda how he had dispensed with Ekata, Dvita and Trita who had come to meet him at that place telling them that they were not fit for spiritual life from him because in fact their mind was centered only upon mortificatory penances. He called Nārada *ekāntikottama*[81] and imparted to him the way of spiritual life. Nārada also had a vision of the Viśvarūpa of God manifesting Himself in different forms and colours in hundreds of faces and eyes and feet, almost a replica of the Viśvarūpa which the Lord showed to Arjuna. When asked by the Lord to seek a boon, Nārada said that since he had a vision of God he had already got the fruit of *tapa*, *yama* and *niyama*.[82] This shows a very developed theism.

Various scholars have tried to interpret the story of the white men of Śvetadvīpa in different ways. Bhandarkar rejects the view that it is a reference to Christians in the West while Raychaudhuri seems to think them mythical.[83] V.S. Agrawal sees a similarity between them and the Iranian Dastoors.[84] Their identification, however, remains uncertain.

The epic describes several incarnations of Viṣṇu. One of them is the *Varāha avatāra*. In the Śāntiparva, chapter 333, it is stated that when the earth was sinking because of flood, God in the form of Varāha saved it. To save the earth he performed ancestor worship also — though he has no ancestor and is the beginning of all things — by establishing mud-mounds (*mṛt-piṇḍas*). Another such incarnation is that of Hayagrīva form which the Lord took up to rescue the Vedas when Brahmā pleaded with Him. Madhu and Kaiṭabha, two demons, had seized the two Vedas from Brahmā.[85] Similarly, *Viṣṇu-Sahasranāma* in the Anuśāsanaparva is an important development in the history of Vaiṣṇavism and carries further the recitation as Nārāyaṇa's names by Nārada in the Śāntiparvan.[86]

Besides Viṣṇuite devotion, many other gods are also seen to be worshipped in the *Mahābhārata*. The most important among them is Śiva. Two conceptions of Śiva can be seen in the *Mahābhārata* which are both contradictory to each other — Śive of the earlier portions of the epic and that of the later. In the earlier part of the epic he appears in continuation of the *Yajurveda* tradition, a weird god of diverse names but powerful and easily pleased. He is sometimes described as the son of Brahmā created to create.[87] As a god of procreation he was worshipped by Drupada who celebrated a festival *Pāśupaṭa Utsava*[88] where it is seen that Śiva has the bull standard, bull vehicle and Umā as his consort. But by the time the epic grew in

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size the importance and popularity of the Śiva cult was also spreading. Hence we see a great difference in the later portions. Now Śiva creates the creator (Brahma). In the Droṇaparva,[89] in part of the Karṇaparva and in Anuśāsanaparva[90] he is the Supreme God. Even as early as Āraṇyakaparva[91] he is the giver of all sorts of boons to Arjuna when he is pleased by Arjuna's prayers and austerities. Even Jayadratha gets a boon from him. Hence as early as some of the legends recorded in the Āraṇyakaparva Śiva is seen to be a God easily pleased by devotion and austerities. He becomes very powerful in the Droṇa, Karṇa and the Anuśāsana parvas. The most elaborate description is in the last. Here it is stated that he created Brahmā who praised his supreme powers. Viṣṇu is also created by him. He is distinguished from Rudra whom he created as Kāla. Thus Rudra is his destructive form. In himself Śiva has a double nature. All opposites are reconciled in him. His consort is his own śakti — as destructiveness. She is Kālī, ruler over *yonī*. Śiva is the destroyer at the end of the *kalpa*. His sheer sport is symbolized by his dance in its terrible as well as benign form. He is the ideal ascetic, the contemplative philosopher and sage. In various passages of the Anuśāsanaparva[92] he is extolled as an 'all God with the attributes of the supreme Brahma'. He is all pervading but nowhere to be seen. He is the Creator and the Lord of Brahma, Viṣṇu and Indra whom the gods from Brahma to Piśācas worship. He transcends material nature and is meditated upon by the *ṛṣis* who are wrapped up in contemplation. In the same parva Kṛṣṇa is seen as going to the Himālayas to propitiate Śiva for a son for Jāmbavatī.[93] In the same parva is recited the 1008 names of Śiva[94] to Yudhiṣṭhira who is told that Śankara had created all things, stationary and moving and there was nothing superior to Mahādeva.

Śiva-bhakti is best portrayed in the Sauptikaparva in the episode of Aśvatthāmā and Śiva.[95] The characteristic mark of bhakti shown to Śiva by Aśvatthāmā and Śiva's 'companions' is taking refuge in Śiva, seeking his protection, offering oneself up as victim, adoration and service in thought, word and deed and a certain participation in the divine. Śiva, as a reward, gives boons and comes to participate in their nature by entering into a union with them. According to Maria Susai Dhavamony[96] the sacrificial connotation and reciprocal participation are still prevalent here and the pure notion of the love of God is only implicatory if at all contained in these manifestations of bhakti. She further says that it is not the bhakti of a liberated man entering into a mystical union with God and neither is it the bhakti which has the renunciation of illusions (worldly powers) and leads to the consequent purity of the soul. The religious attitude certainly implies on the part of the devotee loyal service and sincere worship of and trust in God. God on His part returns favour for bhakti and lavishes boon. It is only in the *Gītā* and the *Nārāyaṇiya* section that *sādhya* bhakti is mentioned.

But still we cannot deny the fact that an intense love for God is seen in many of the portions of the epic. Even in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* where a desireless bhakti is advocated, the Lord says from time to time that his bhakti never goes without any boon.[97]

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Besides Kṛṣṇa and Śiva, other deities are also seen to be worshipped such as the Sun God. Karṇa addresses the God Sūrya — "*Bhagavantamhaṁ bhakto, yathā māṁ vettha, Gopate....*"[98] Sūrya is to be worshipped with loving devotion (bhakti) especially on the sixth or the seventh day. His adorer believing in his love (*tvadbhavamāgataḥ*) will live long. Sūrya assures Karṇa of his bhakti — "*mamāpi bhaktirutpannā sa tvaṁ....*" 'I have been inspired by love for thee, my friend'.[99]

Devi is also worshipped. As seen before — she is the consort of Śiva and presides over *yoni*. In the Bhīṣmaparva Arjuna worships Durgā for victory and she grants him the crown. In the Anuśāsanaparva (ch.14-15) Pārvatī or Umā grants boons to Kṛṣṇa after being pleased by his worship and austerities.

Anuśāsanaparva has other worships also as cow worship (ch. 50, 69) and Gangā worship (ch. 26).

Ānanda Vardhana described the *Mahābhārata* in '*Dhvanyāloka*' as having the *śāntarasa* predominant.[100] In the days of Bharata *śānta rasa* was not recognized. In earlier literature the epics were of *vīra rasa*. The impression of *śānta rasa* thus depends upon the later revision of the earlier *Mahābhārata* of war, vengeance, death and terror. It is quite different from the *Iliad* for which one could say the leading *rasa* was *raudra*. Here a philosophical point of view which is specially expressed in the *Gītā* and Śānti parvas of the *Mahābhārata* makes one take all these vicissitudes as examples of human mutability and vanity. The whole tale moves towards the final journey towards the Himālayas. That is why Ānanda Vardhana calls it an example of *śānta rasa*. The recognition of bhakti as *rasa* had not taken place even by the time of Ananda Vardhana. He could not, therefore, read it in the *Mahābhārata*. Bhakti in the *Mahābhārata* is of an active type in the sense that the object of bhakti, Kṛṣṇa, himself claims to work for the restoration of a righteous world order through active political and military struggle and Arjuna, his constant companion, is urged by Kṛṣṇa not to abandon the world but to fight and to think of the Lord and fight without worrying, *Yuddhyasva vigatajvaraḥ*.[101]

REFERENCES

1. The *Gītā* IV.1-2, e.g. refers to yoga tradition passing from generation to generation among the royal sages. One finds corroboration of it, in the Upaniṣads also, which speak of such Kṣatriya rulers who were also philosophers of great repute. For example, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.* 6.2.1-3 and *Chāndogya Up.* 5.3.1-6 speak of Pravahaṇa Jaivāli of Pāñcāla; *Kauśītakī Up.* 4.2 mentions Ajātaśatru of Kāśi; *Chāndogya Up.* 5.11.1-7 mentions Aśvapati of Kekaya and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.* 3.1.1. mentions Janaka of Videha as such a ruler. It is important to note that Pravāhaṇa Jaivali is specifically mentioned in relation with a *Kṣatriya-vidyā*.
2. *Mahāparinibbānasutta*: "*Cātummahāpathe rañño cakkavattissa thūpam karonti. Evam cātummahāpathe Tathāgatassa thūoo kātabbo*".

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3. Weber, "On the Rāmāyaṇa", *I.A.*, 1872, pp. 120-24, 172-82, 239-53; cf. Lassen, *I.A.*, 1874, pp. 102-3; cf. N.B. Utgikar, "The Story of the *Daśaratha Jātaka* and of the *Rāmāyaṇa*"—*JRAS*, Centenary Supplement, 1914, pp. 203-21; Weber, *History of Indian Literature*, pp. 191-92; Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature*, vol. I, pp. 508ff.
4. *Ṛg.* IV. 57.6.
5. Winternitz, op. cit., pp. 515-16; Bulcke, *Rāma-Kathā*, pp. 107ff.
6. D.C. Sen, *The Bengali Rāmāyaṇa*, pp. 2-3.
7. V.S. Sukthankar, "The Rāma episode and the Rāmāyaṇa", *Studies in Indology* (Presented to Prof. P.V. Kane on his birthday by S.M. Katre, P.K. Gode), Poona Oriental Series No. 75, discusses the problem of Rāmopākhyāna as the source of *Rāmāyaṇa* or vice versa which was first put forward by Sleszakiswicz and then Weber, who opined that Rāmopākhyāna was the source of *Rāmāyaṇa* and represents an epitome of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the two being derived independently from a lost common source. Weber was contradicted by Jacobi who in his *Das Rāmāyana, Geschichte und Inhalt* opined that Rāmopākhyāna was based on *Rāmāyaṇa*, the former being a careless abridgement of Vālmīki's work. He said that certain passages would be unintelligible in the Rāmopākhyāna if we do not know them detailed in the epic, and he also points out a dozen passages which the episode has in common with the epic. cf. Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature*, vol. I, p. 384, 501. Sukthankar says that Rāmopākhyāna and *Rāmāyaṇa* show an identity of source and the source was not a manuscript of the *Rāmāyaṇa* but a memorized version of it current at the time of the adapter and his locality. The compilers of such works could hardly avoid the influence from oral tradition which existed then. Hence we must understand that Rāmopākhyāna is an epitome of our *Rāmāyaṇa*, a fact which can be regarded as established on account of the numerous verbal agreements which have been shown to exist between the two poems.
8. Bulcke, op. cit., pp. 115ff.
9. Sankalia has recently argued about the totally mythical character of the Rāmāyaṇa—*Rāmāyaṇa, Myth or Reality.*
10. Winternitz, op. cit., pp. 495-96
11. Ibid., p. 496.
12. Bulcke, op. cit., pp. 731-32
13. Pargiter, *J.R.A.S.*, 1911, pp. 803 and 1913, p. 396.
14. Kshetresh Chattopadhyaya, *Allahabad University Studies*, Pt. I, pp. 75-156.
15. *Rāmāyaṇa*, Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa, I. 7.
16. Bulcke, op. cit., Ch. 8, p. 130.
17. *Rāmāyaṇa*, Araṇya-kāṇḍa, XXXI. 26.
18. Ibid., 66.19; Bengalee reading III, 71.16.
19. *Rāmāyaṇa*, III. 74.
20. Ibid., III. 74, 12.
21. Ibid., III. 74, 8.
22. Ibid., III. 74, 13.
23. Ibid., III. 74. 18.
24. Ibid., III. 64, 56-73.
25. Ibid., IV. 3, 28-29.
26. Ibid., IV. 66.

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27. "*Sarvānllokānsusaṁhṛtya sabhūtānsacarācarān*
Punareva tathā sraṣṭuṁ śakto Rāmo mahāyasāḥ.
Devāsuranarendreṣu Yakṣarakṣorageṣu ca
Vidyādhareṣu nāgeṣu gandharveṣu mṛgesu ca.
Siddheṣu kinnarendreṣu patatriṣu ca sarvataḥ
Srvatra sarvabhūteṣu sarvakāleṣu nāsti saḥ
Yo Rāmaṁ pratiyudhyeta viṣṇutulyaparākramam.
Brahmā svayambhūścaturānāno vā
Rudrastrinetrastripurāntako vā
Indro mahendraḥ suranāvako vā
Sthātuṁ na saktā yudhi Rāghavasya".
Rāmāyaṇa, V, 51, 34-44.

28. *Rāmāyaṇa*, VI, 34, 22; According to Jacobi this is interpolated.
29. Ibid., VI, 50, 22; This is not found in other readings, but in Baroda Edition.
30. Ibid., VI, 117, 6.
31. Ibid., II, 13, 16.
32. *Rāmāyaṇa*, V. 65, 19.
33. Ibid., V, 15, 12.
34. Ibid., V, 38. 9.
35. Ibid., VI, 113, 22.
36. Ibid., VI, 113, 24.
37. Ibid., I, 15
38. "*Akṣayaṁ madhuhantāraṁ jānāmi tvāṁ sureśvaraṁ*
Na ceyam tava kākutstha vrīḍā bhavitumarhati.
Tvavā trailokyanāthena yadahaṁ vimukhīkṛtaḥ".
Rāmāyaṇa, I, 73, 17, 19.
39. Ibid., I, 1, 18.
40. Cf. Bulcke, op. cit., pp. 129ff.
41. "*Tasya lāngalahastasya kṛṣataḥ kṣetra-maṇḍalaṁ*
Ahaṁ kilotthitā bhitvā jagatīṁ nṛpa te sutā."
Rāmāyaṇa, II, 118, 28.
42. See above, p. 81.
43. *Rāmāyaṇa*, V. 38, 9. For a *Gṛhyasūtra* description of a personified Sītā, vide, Winternitz, op. cit., p. 515, fn. 4. Actually such descriptions were not rare, e.g, the Ṛgvedic description of Araṇyānī is similarly vivid.
44. See above pp. 81-82; *Rāmāyaṇa*, VI, 113, 22; VI, 113, 24.
45. "*Rāmābhidhāno, haririty uvāca*," *Raghuvaṁśa*, XIII, 1.
46. For a detailed and scholarly survey of the Rāma legend after Vālmīki's work, see Bulcke, op. cit., pp. 159 ff.
47. Sukthankar, *On the Meaning of the Mahābhārata*, pp. 30-31, cf. Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature*, vol. I, pp. 316ff.
48. Winternitz, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 494ff; Hopkins, *The Social and Military Position of the Ruling Caste*, pp. 2ff; Hopkins, *The Great Epic of India*, p. 398.
49. Winternitz, op. cit., vol. I. p. 475; R. C. Majumdar, *The Age of Imperial Unity*, p. 252; *Cambridge History of India* vol. I, pp. 252ff.
50. Pāṇini, *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, 3.2.162; ibid., 3.4.74; ibid., 6.2.38; ibid., 8.3.95; *Āsvalāyana*, 3.4.4.

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51. On the historicity of Kṛṣṇa, see Raychaudhary, *History of the Vaiṣnava Sect*, pp. 62-118; Bhandarkar, *Vaisnavism, Saivism and other Minor Religious Sects*, pp. 15-16; Garbe, *ERE*, II, pp. 193-97; Ruben, *JAOS*, 61; *JRAS*, 1941; Pusalkar, *Studies in the Epics and Puraṇas*, pp. 49ff; Tadpatrikar, *ABORI*, X, pp. 269-344; S. L. Katre, *Allahabad University Studies*, VIII, pp. 193-222.
52. See Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣnavism, Śaivism and Other Minor Religious Sects*, p. 50; Winternitz, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 456; Kennedy, *JRAS*, 1907, p. 961.
53. Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, pp. 212, 215-216.
54. Cf. Sukthankar, op. cit., p. 96.
55. Ibid., p. 97.
56. *MBH*, Sabhāparva, 33, 27-31; vol. I, p. 333, Sabhāparva with its balladic style and archaisms appears to be one of the earliest parts of the *Mahābhārata*.
57. *MBH*, Āraṇyakaparva, 13.10-15, vol. I, p. 403.
58. Ibid., Āraṇyakaparva, 13.23-24.
59. Ibid., Udyogaparva, 128.34-50; vol. II, p. 1050.
60. Ibid., Āranyakaparva, 13.39-40; Udyoga parva, 48.20; Āranyaka parva, 45.18.
61. V. S. Agrawal, *Bharata Savitri*, vol. I, p. 187.
62. It is really *Bhāgavata* rather than *Pāncarātra*.
63. *MBH*, Udyogaparva, 48.20; vol. II, p. 961.
64. Ibid., Udyogaparva, 48.18-19; vol. II, p. 961.
65. "*Śuddha bhāvaṁ gato bhaktyā śāstrādvedmi janārdanaṁ*". *MBH*, Udyogaparva, 67.5; *MBH*, vol. II, p.983.
66. "*Eka Ekāyanah panthā yena yānti manīṣinah*
Tam dṛṣṭvā mṛtyumetyeti mahāstatra na sajjati".
MBH, Yānasandhiparva, 67.15.
67. Ibid., Yānasandhi parva, 67.21.
68. Cf. V. S. Agrawal, op. cit., vol. II, p.67. Where this is justified to be a Gupta intrusion. This suggestion has little to commend it.
69. Cf. "*Jñānam tadetadamalam duravāpamāha nārāyano*
narasakhah kila nāradāya
Ekāntinām bhagavatastadakincanānam
pādāravindarajasāplutdehināmsyāt"
Bhāgavata Puraṇa, VII, 6, 27.
70. *MBH*, Sabhāparva, 61, 41-42; *MBH*, vol. I, p. 369 refers to the miracle. The prayer of Draupadī has been excluded from the critical edition. It can be seen in the Citraśālā Press, Poona:
"*Kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa mahāyogin viśvātman viśvabhavana*
Prapannaṁ pāhi govinda kurumadhyevasīdatiṁ".
MBH, Chitrasala Press, Edn., Sabhaparva, 63, 43.
71. *MBH*, Vanaparva, 263, 7-16, p.417. Chitraśālā Press Edn.
72. Ibid., Udyogaparva, 94; ibid., vol. II, pp. 1016-17.
73. Sukthankar, op. cit., p. 103.
74. Cf. Shri Krishna Prem, *Bhagavadgītā*. pp. XXVff. that Dhṛtarāṣtra represents the empirical ego, the lower and tran smigrating personality blinded by egoism. Sukthankar agrees. op. cit., p. 103.
75. See Chapter, *Bhakti in the Gītā*.

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76. R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism Śaivism and Other Minor Religious Sects*, p.48.
77. P. Banerjee, *Early Indian Religions*, p- 88,
78. *MBH*, Śāntiparva, 3321-39; vol. III, pp. 2439-2483; Bhandarkar, op. cit., pp. 6-11; Raychaudhari, op. cit., pp. 112ff; V.S. Agrawal, op. cit., vol. III, pp. 194ff.
79. "*Nityāñjalikṛtānbrahma japataḥ prāgudanmukhān*
Mānaso nāma sa japo japyate tairmahātmabhiḥ".
MBH, Śānti parva, 323-32.
80. "*Ekānta-bhāvopagatāḥ*", ibid., 323.24; 332.18
"*Ekāntabhāva*," ibid., 322.4 and also
"*Ekāntinaste puruṣāh śvetadvīpanivāsinaḥ*",
ibid., 323.26.
81. *MBH*, Śāntiparva, 339.13. (Chitraśālā Press, Poona).
82. "*Adya me tapaso deva vamasya niyamasya ca*
sadyaḥ phalamavāptaṁ vai dṛṣṭo yadbhagavān mayā".
Ibid., Śāntiparva 329.16 — Chitraśālā Press edn.
"*Vara eṣa mamātyantaṁ dṛṣṭastvaṁ yat sanātanaḥ*
"*bhagavanviśvadṛk siṁhaḥ sarvamūrtirmahānprabhuḥ*".
ibid., 339.17.
83. R.G. Bhandarkar, op. cit., pp. 6-11; Raychaudhuri, op. cit., pp. 112ff.
84. V.S. Agrawal, *Bharata Savitri*, vol. III, p. 196.
85. *MBH*, Śāntiparva, ch. 347.
86. Ibid., ch. 323; Ibid., Vol. III, pp. 2447-48.
87. Ibid., Sauptikaparva, ch. 17.
88. E.W. Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, p. 220.
89. *MBH*, Droṇaparva, chs. 80-81.
90. Ibid., Anuśāsanaparva, ch. 14.
91. Ibid., Āraṇyakaparva, chs. 38-40.
92. Ibid., Anuśāsanaparva, ch. 14-15.
93. Ibid., ch. 16.
94. Ibid., ch. 17.
95. Ibid., Sauptikaparva, ch. 7.
96. Maria Susai Dharamony, *Love of God according to Śaiva Siddhānta*, a study in the mysticism and theology of Śaivism, p. 75-76.
97. *Infra*, p. 303.
98. *MBH*, Āraṇyakaparva, ch. 286, vs. 1-4.
99. Ibid., ch. 285, vs. 7.
100. Ānanda Vardhana, *Dhvanyāloka*, pp. 529-34.
101. *Bhāgavadgītā, III*, 30.

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4

Bhakti in the Gita

Introduction

WHILE the Upaniṣads view the essence of man as divine they tend to take a transcendental view of what equally underlies man as well as nature. The old Vedic gulf between the race of man and the race of Gods is still kept in the sense that man is required to transcend his merely human or psycho-physical personality to realize his essential element.[1] It is in the *Bhagavadgītā* that the next step is taken with the doctrine of incarnation according to which God Himself is born in time though He is unborn, infinite and is the transcendent Lord of all creatures:

"*Ajopi sannavyayātmā bhūtānāṁ Īśvaropisan*
Prakṛtiṁ svāmadhiṣṭhāya sambhavāmyātmamāyayā".[2]

He assumes a form and humanity now because of the supreme manifestation of divine nature. Arjuna indeed prefers the human form of Kṛṣṇa to his cosmic form. Kṛṣṇa himself declares that unmanifest absolute as inaccessible to man.[3] The upaniṣadic ascent towards God is now matched by the descent of God among men. Leaving His formlessness God now descends in time and is born as a human being. But, as Coomaraswamy has remarked, "God's 'descent' or His incarnation as Rāma or Kṛṣṇa, differs essentially from the fatally determined incarnation of mortals that have forgotten who they are; it is indeed *their* need that now determines the descent and not any lack on His part who descends".[4] With this humanization of God, bhakti comes into its own as love within a personal relationship between man and God serving as the very archetype of love among men.

The Concept of Godhood

Regarding the supreme Reality there are two famous passages in the *Gītā*, one in the thirteenth chapter where there is a discussion of *kṣetra* and *kṣetrajña*[5] and the other in the fifteenth chapter where *kṣara* and *akṣara puruṣa* and *puruṣottama* occur.[6] The doctrines of *kṣetra* and *kṣetrajña* sum up the Upaniṣadic doctrine of the distinction between the self and the not-self where the latter is pervaded by and describes its reality from the former. The doctrine of *kṣara* and *akṣara* recapitulates the Sānkhyan teaching of the eternal consciousness as the ground of

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phenomenal personality. It is the doctrine of *puruṣottama* which goes beyond both and represents the original and characteristic doctrine of the *Gītā*. This has been particularly emphasized by Śri Aurobindo.[7] The Divine manifests a two-fold power — *kṣara* and *akṣara*, i.e. the mutable existence and the immutable spirit. But the Divine is neither wholly *kṣara* nor *akṣara* as He is also the *puruṣottama* who transcends the world and is yet immanent in it. Man has to rise above his ego, thereby attaining to impersonality in his being — the immutable. But the ultimate aim of an individual is to attain a union with the *puruṣottama*. In fact the concept of *puruṣottama* derives its meaning in the light of the doctrine of works and bhakti. This is the reason why Arjuna fights the battle even after having attained knowledge. It is the *puruṣottama* who is the enjoyer of the sacrifice not the immutable, relationless absolute. *Puruṣottama* is capable of all intimate human relations.[8]

The idea of the *avatāra* conveys an idea of a supreme personal God interested in human destinies.[9]

The lord is immanent in this world and yet transcend it,[10] is responsible for the birth and destruction of the universe[11] yet is the *puruṣottama* who manifests Himself in human form as the *avatāra*. Kṛṣṇa himself makes a declaration of his *avatārahood* in the fourth chapter of Gītā while giving to Arjuna the ancient knowledge of yoga which he gave to Vivasvān, Vivasvān to Manu and Manu to Ikṣvāku. When asked by Arjuna how he gave that knowledge to the Sun God and others who were the first-born of beings while he (Kṛṣṇa) himself was his (Arjuna's) contemporary, Kṛṇṣa says that he remembers all his lives, as he is unborn and imperishable in his self-existence and is the Lord of all existence. Yet he stands upon his own nature and comes to birth by his own māyā.[12] He says that whenever there is the fading of *dharma* and the uprising of unrighteousness, then he takes birth.[13] For the deliverance of the good, for the destruction of the evil doers, for the enthroning of the right, he is born from age to age.[14] Here we have the full-fledged theory of *avatārahood*.

Hence the main purpose of an *avatāra* seems to protect the world and see whether righteousness prevails there. But the function of an *avatāra* is much more than this. In the words of Sri Aurobindo this is merely an '*otiose*' function and can be performed by kings, prophets and sages too. The real purpose of the *avatāra* is much higher. The *avatāra* has to point out the way by which man can rise up to Divine nature and consciousness.[15] It is the descent of spirit into matter, in order to help the 'ascent of man into godhead'. This is achieved in the 'asymptotic vision' which constitutes the ultimate spiritual knowledge,[16] and which makes the *avatāra* the final culmination of divine manifestation in the world.[17] The *avatāra* is a dual phenomenon of divinity and so he does not act completely in a supernatural way, but assumes human sorrows and physical sufferings so that men may learn courage from his example and to show the world that it is possible to become what we potentially are, i.e. to rise to the divine status under such limitations.

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These views about the *avatāra* find parallel in some recent writers, e.g. S. Radhakrishnan,[18] and Miss Underhill who compare the development of the rising aspirant to the development of an embryo which in its upward ascent recapitulates all the stages of the spiritual development of the race.[19] R.D. Ranade gives the *avatāra* a mystical interpretation. He believes that the *avatāra* is the descent of God's form before the spiritual vision of the aspirant and he quotes Yāska's definition of the word '*ṛṣi*' in his *Nirukta*, "*Tat Brahma svayambhū etān Ṛṣīn tapasyamānānabhyānarṣat tadṛṣīnāṁ ṛṣītvaṁ*", a *Ṛṣi* is one who sees the form of God descending before his very eyes.[20]

Hence amidst the manifold functions of the *avatāra* the two broad ones are the restoration of dharma and the deliverance to all men a new spiritual message and a new law of divine growth and spiritual realization. According to Sri Aurobindo when an intellectual and practical change is needed it can be brought about by the Lord's *vibhūtis*. He says that 'the *vibhūti* of the Divine is the impersonally manifested power of His quality. It is His out-flowing in whatever form of knowledge, energy, love, etc. The *avatāra* is at the same time a *vibhūti* but a *vibhūti* is not necessarily an *avatāra*. Only Divine quality is not enough to become an *avatāra*, there must be the inner consciousness of the Lord and a self-governing of the human nature by self-conscious divine presence. The heightening of the power of the qualities is only an ascent in the ordinary manifestation. In the *avatāra* there is a special manifestation, the divine birth from above, the eternal and universal Godhead descended into a form of individual humanity, *ātmānam sṛjāmi*, and conscious not only behind the veil but in the outward nature.[21]

In the seventh chapter of the Gītā Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa declares that *there is only one God Vāsudeva* in the universe, other *devatās* are only His forms. He says that at the end of many lives the wise man resorts to Him, knowing that Vāsudeva is all that is. Such a great soul is found very rarely.[22] Rāmānuja understands by this phrase that "Vāsudeva is my all."[23] Besides referring to God's imperishable majesty felt by the devotee, it points out towards a humble and trustful devotee, who resigns himself to the Lord's hands in the faith that He is all. Śankara, on the contrary, finds in '*Vāsudevah sarvaṁ*' a clear affirmation of *advaita*.[24]

In fact, the notion of the Divine implies a corresponding notion of the human soul. God is the supreme person overseeing nature, history and destiny where the soul, involved in the temporal process, seeks to realize God. The relationship of the two is the closest possible personal relationship. The *Bhagvadgītā* in fact, refers to the *jīva* as the *parā prakṛti* of the Lord[25] and again as an eternal part (*aṁśa*) of the divine.[26] While the metaphysics of such statements remain ambiguous, the religious attitude is clear enough and resembles that of *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* closely.

Modes of Worship

Kṛṣṇa says further that whatever form any devotee with faith wishes to worship, He makes that faith steady.[27] These lines show that all forms are forms of the one Supreme, as the next lines also say that ultimately 'I (Vāsudeva) am the one

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who is the giver of the rewards through whatever gods the devotee worships'.[28] But after saying that the devotee may worship any god he chooses to, the Lord immediately says that temporary is the fruit gained by these men of small minds. 'The worshippers of the gods go to the gods but My devotees come to Me'.[29] These lines clearly show a tendency towards a strong and developed monotheism showing that only Vāsudeva is the one highest divinity, though other gods are His manifestations as seen from the other verses,[30] the supreme, transcendent Godhead who embraces and transcends all aspects and is integral in being, absolute in love and complete in will. His other forms are partial and limited and have a meaning only at lower levels of development. For instance, "As men approach me so do I accept them ; men on all sides follow my path, O Pārtha."[31] And also "Even those who are devotees of other gods worship them with faith, they also sacrifice to me alone, though not according to the true law."[32]

An integral knowledge of this Lord is attained through having the heart fully engrossed in Him (*mayi āsaktamanaḥ*) knowing only one support, i.e. His (*madāśraya*), and *dhyāna yoga* (*Yogaṁ yuñjan*).[33]

Let us first consider the way of reaching God by *dhyāna yoga* described in chapter sixth of the *Gītā*.[34] It is said that a perfect Yogī who practises union with the self is like a lamp in a windless place which flickereth not.[35] His thought is at rest by the practice of concentration, and he beholds the self through the self and enjoys in the self.[36] When the soul is no longer attached to outward things, one finds happiness that exists in the self. Such a one enjoys an imperishable happiness because his self is in yoga, *yukta* by *yoga* with Brahman.[36] These passages remind us of several upaniṣadic passages where this is regarded as the highest state when the ātmān rejoices in the ātmān alone — "*ātmanā ātmānaṁ paśyannātmani tuṣyati.*" *Kaṭha*, *Muṇḍaka* and *Śvetāśvatara*, all three upaniṣads enjoin *dhyāna* for direct experience.

Bhakti

There is infinite bliss in such a state. But at the end of the chapter it is stated very clearly that this end (union with God) which is attained through bhakti is the highest goal. The greatest of all the *yogins* is the devotee or *bhakta* "and of all *yogins*, he who, full of faith, worships me, with his inner self abiding me, I hold to be the most attained (to me in yoga).[37] Hence the most important way of attaining Him is through unalloyed bhakti or *ananya bhakti*. In fact, all the nine types of bhakti mentioned in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* later, are found in the *Gītā*. According to the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* listening to the Lord's guṇas, *līlā*, name, etc., his *kīrtana*, remembrance of his form, service of his feet, pūjā, prayer, servant-lord relationship, friendship with the Lord, *ātmanivedana* or self-surrender with unflinching faith that the Lord will save.[38]

By hearing (*śravaṇaṁ*)

Others, by hearing from others' worship, too cross beyond death by their devotion to what they have heard.[39]

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Singing his glory (*kīrtanaṁ*)

'Always doing *kīrtana* and bowing down to me with devotion those who are strenuous and steadfast in vows and ever disciplined—they worship me.'[40]

Constant remembrance (*viṣṇoḥ smaraṇaṁ*)

'Their thoughts are fixed in me, their lives wholly given up to me, enlightening each other and ever conversing of me, they are contented and rejoice in me.'[41]

Pāda-sevanaṁ and dāsya bhakti

'Therefore, bowing down and prostrating my body before thy feet, O adorable Lord, I seek thy grace.'[42] In the *Gītā* the *dāsya bhāva* is not found clearly. But Kṛṣṇa is regarded as Lord of all existences (*bhūtamīśvaraḥ*).[43] Arjuna is constantly asked to dedicate all that he does to this supreme Lord — "*mayī sarvāṇi karmāṇi sannyasya.*"[44]

Worship or arcanaṁ

'Whoever offers to me with devotion a leaf, flower, fruit or water, that offering of love, of the pure of heart I accept.'[45]

Here the typical pūjā is mentioned. These lines also point to image worship. This way of worship could also have a deeper meaning. The offering of water might be a symbol of offering one's life, as water is the symbol of life. Fruits could be the fruits of ones *karman*. The flower could also be the symbol of the heart and leaves could symbolize the Vedas or jñāna (as stated in the *Gītā* itself—*chandāmsi yasya parṇāṇi*),[46] i.e. offering leaves could mean offering one's knowledge, i.e. the Lord should always be in one's mind.[47]

Vandanaṁ

Prayer or hymn of praise—after Arjuna sees the *Viśvarūpa* of the Lord, he praises the Supreme's magnificience.[48]

Sakhya

'For whatever have I spoken in rashness to thee thinking that thou art my companion and unaware of thy greatness, 'O, Kṛṣṇa, O Yādava, O comrade, out of my negligence or may be through fondness.'[49]

The Lord was a companion to Arjuna and as such plays with him, has meals with him[50] and also acts as his charioteer and yet Arjuna has an immeasurable respect and devotion for Him.

Ātmanivedanaṁ

Self surrender with the unflinching faith that the Lord will save. 'For those who take refuge in me, O Pārtha, though they are lowly born, women, vaiśyas and śūdras also attain to the highest goal.'[51] 'Doing continually all action whatsoever,

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taking refuge in me, he reaches by my grace, the eternal undying abode.'[52] Another example of *ātmanivedaṇa* is found in the following very famous, oft quoted lines—'Abandoning all duties come to me alone for shelter. Be not grieved, for I shall release thee from perils.'[53]

An *ananya* bhakti or *avyabhicārī* bhakti is recommended by the Lord. In the eleventh chapter the Lord showing His cosmic form to Arjuna, says that this form is very difficult to see and that the gods are anxious to see this form,[54] and which cannot be seen through the vedas or by austerities, by gifts or by sacrifices.[55] But only by unswerving (*ananya*) devotion can it be known.[56] In fact these lines remind very strongly of *Nārāyaṇīya* section of the *Mahābhārata* where it is stated that Ekata, Dvita and Trita could not attain the Lord by their austerities and not even Bṛahaspati who favoured sacrifice, but Vasu Uparicara could attain the Lord by his *ekāntika* bhakti. *Avyabhicārī* bhakti can make one rise beyond the 'three modes.'[57]

This *parā* bhakti[58] can become both a means and an end. In the *Gītā*, the Lord says that 'through devotion he comes to know me, what My measure is and who I am in Truth, then having known me in truth, he forthwith enters me.'[59] From these lines it is clear that the devotee knows the Lord integrally through bhakti and then attains Him through *ananyabhāva*, i.e. he sees Vāsudeva everywhere. But this does not indicate a disappearance of the individual in a featureless absolute—but devotion to the supreme Lord who combines in Himself the mutable and the immutable in the highest state. This is clear from the verse which precedes the above quoted verse. "Having become one with Brahman and being tranquil in spirit, he neither grieves nor desires. Regarding all beings as alike he attains supreme devotion to me."[60] Here bhakti becomes an end too. But this bhakti is an integral bhakti which combines in itself the truth of knowledge also. "The soul loses its separative personality when it becomes Brahman; it is then that it can live in the divine Person and can attain to the Supreme revealing bhakti for the *Puruṣottama* and can come to know Him utterly by the power of His profound bhakti, by "the heart's knowledge"—*bhaktyā mām abhijānāti*. Here the "heart's fathomless vision completes the mind's absolute experience" *samagram mām jñātvā*."[61]

Results of bhakti

Let us see the results of God realization as enumerated in the *Gītā*. We are told in the *Gītā* that the vision of God is accompanied by the feeling of joy and peace. Since happiness implies the absence of pain, it should be regarded as the *summum bonum*. This is called *ānanda*—bliss unmixed with any pain and is the true nature of bhakti. "That in which he finds this supreme delight perceived by the intelligence and beyond the reach of the senses, wherein established he no longer falls away from the truth."[62] This is the reason why even the "heaviest sorrows cannot shake a man who is merged in this *ānanda*."[63] Secondly, his mind attains perfect peace. 'Supreme happiness comes to the *yogin* whose mind is peace-

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ful, whose passions are at rest, who is stainless and has become one with God.'[64] Again, one attains, thus, to a vision of equality—a devotee sees God in all beings and all beings in God.'[65] This is a deeper principle than the brotherhood of man—this sense of oneness in all beings. The immanence of divine self in all beings makes them essentially one. We are reminded of the lines of *Īśopaniṣad*—'He who sees all beings in his own self and his own self in all beings, does not feel revulsion by reason of such a view,'[66] and of the lines *īśāvāsyamidam sarvaṁ*, i.e. the whole world is pervaded by God.

Ecstacy—This vision of equality helps in the ecstacy generated by true devotion and God vision. When Arjuna sees the *viśva rūpa* of the Lord,[67] it is a tremendous experience for him and he is filled with elements of astonishment, terror and rapture.[68] Here astonishment and terror are mixed with rapture and ecstacy. Madhusūdana Sarasvatī categorizes this state under '*prīti-bhayānaka rasa*.'[69] At the same time the devotee becomes indifferent to worldly things, takes no interest in things to be heard or seen, *tadāgantāsi nirvedam śrotavyasya śrutasya ca*.[70] The only object of hearing and seeing for such a person is God. This *nirveda* also occurs in the upaniṣads—*nirveda-mayānnāstya kṛtah kṛtena*.[71]

Bhakti, again, reveals a great power of redemption. Even if an ignorant person hears others worship, he is redeemed.[72]

Whereas joy and peace, vision of equality, ecstacy, indifference for worldly things—all these come under *sādhya bhakti*, i.e. to say, these states which are described under the heading results of bhakti are in fact the character of *sādhya bhakti* itself, which is bhakti or the integral love which is reached after *sādhana* bhakti. Under the many other results of *sādhya* bhakti we might enumerate the following—the *bhakta* enters Vāsudeva,[73] attains the *svarūpa* of Vāsudeva,[74] becomes *triguṇātīta*, i.e. rises above the 'three modes' of Nature.[75]

Element of grace

A very important aspect of bhakti is the attainment of the Lord's grace. It is not simply by performing our devotional acts that we may achieve the ultimate goal. God must be moved by the endeavours of the devotee. This element of grace was already known to the upaniṣadic seers.[76] In the *Bhagavadgītā*, R.D. Ranade notices three stages of God's grant of grace.[77] In the first place, God gives a particular bent to the devotee's intellect and volitions, a stimulus and a direction in which he might work. That is *Buddhiyoga*.

"To those who are in constant union with me and worship me with love, I grant the power of understanding by which they come to me."[78] Secondly, after he has worked continuously in this direction for a long time he becomes a recipient of God's *anukampā* or compassion. "Out of compassion for those same ones, remaining within my own true state, I destroy the darkness born of ignorance by the shining lamp of wisdom.[79] And finally, God crowns his efforts with the gift of His blessing - *prasāda* - 'Flee unto Him for shelter with all thy being, O Bharata. By his

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grace shall thou obtain supreme peace and eternal abode."[80] Ranade says that it is only when the aspirant passes through all these stages, namely — *buddhiyoga*, *anukampā* and *prasāda* that we might say that the grace of God has fully descended on him.

By this grace of God all the impending perils of the devotee are warded off. This God promises, but on the condition that the devotee's thoughts be fixed on Him.[81]

Types of bhaktas

In Chapter VII of the *Gītā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa classifies bhaktas into four categories viz., *ārta*, *jijñāsu*, *arthārthī* and *jñāṇī*.[82] *Ārta* is the man in distress; *jijñāsu*, the seeker for knowledge; *arthārthī*, the seeker for worldly possessions and *jñāni* is the man of wisdom. All the four types can come under the types of bhakti stated by Madhusūdana Sarasvatī. According to him types of bhakti are *rājasī*, *tamasī*, *śuddha-sattvikī* and *miśrita*. *Rājasi* arises from jealousy, the third from joy and the fourth from desires, sorrows, etc. *Arthārthī* can be categorized under the *rājasika bhakta* as he desires various possessions and sometimes can even be jealous of God's possessions. *Ārta* bhakta is dominated by fear which is a *tāmasic* emotion—hence *tāmasa* bhakti *jijñasu* is a *miśrita* bhakta as he controls his various desires and other emotions through bhakti and converts them into *bhāva* and hence turns to concentrate his mind on God. *Jñānī* is a *śuddha sāttvika* bhakta. His whole bhakti is joyful. Madhusūdana Sarasvati also argues that though bhakti itself is joyful and joy is *sāttvika* yet *rājasa* and *tāmasa* bhaktis arise when *rājasa* and *tamas* qualities are dominant and cover up the *sattva*.[83]

The Lord favours the *jñānī* bhakta who is ever in constant union with the Divine, whose devotion is single minded.[84] For him only Vāsudeva is everywhere as he is *ekabhakta*. In Chapter IX, the Lord categorizes His bhaktas under *sakāma* bhaktas (*kāmakāmāḥ*) and *niṣkāma* bhaktas (*ananyāḥ*). The *sākāma* bkaktas attain heaven, but as soon as their merit is exhausted they come back to earth[85] but for the *niṣkāma* bhaktas who meditate on the Lord alone, He brings attainment of what they have not (i.e. attainment of the Lord's form) and security in what they have (i.e. the method by which they are bent on attaining the Lord).[86]

As regards the character of the perfect devotee, he has all the qualities enumerated under the heading 'Results of bhakti', i.e., he enjoys a perfect bliss, is peaceful, has a vision of equality, knows ecstacy, is indifferent to worldly things. Besides these he has several other qualities. He leaves no ill-will towards anybody (*adveṣṭa sarvabhutānāṁ*), is friendly (*maitraḥ*), compassionate, is free from egoism (*nirahaṅkāraḥ*), even-minded in pain and pleasure (*samadukhasukhaḥ*) and patient (*kṣamī*)[87]; he is ever content (*saṁtuṣṭah satataṁ yogī*), self-controlled, unshakable in determination (*dṛdhaniścayaḥ*) with mind and understanding given up to the Lord (*mayyārpitamanobuddhir*[88] who is free from joy and anger, fear and agitation *harṣāmarṣabhayodvegair mukto yah sa ca me priyah*).[89] He has no expectations

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(*anapekṣaḥ*), is pure (*śucī*) skilful in action (*dakṣa*) unconcerned (*udāśina*) and untroubled (*gatavyathaḥ*), *sarvārambhaparityāgī* (who has given up all initiative in action);[90] who has renounced both good and evil *śubhāśubharityāgi*)[91]; He behaves alike to foe and friend (*samaḥ śatrau ca mitre ca*), also to good and evil repute (*tathā mānāpamānayoḥ*)is alike in cold and heat, pleasure and pain (*śītoṣṇasukhdukheṣu samaḥ*) and is free from attachment (*sangavivajitaḥ*).[92] He is restrained in speech (*mauni*), content with anything (*samtuṣṭo yena kenacit*), is firm in mind (*sthiramati*).[93] But those who with faith follow Vāsudeva as their supreme aim and follow His immortal wisdom, those devotees are exceedingly dear to him.[94] These virtues described in Chapter XII are repeated again in chapter XVIII[95] for a true bhakta.

Interpretation of the Gītā : Modern

Let us examine the various theories regarding the supremacy of bhakti, *jñān* or *karman* in the *Gītā*. Apart from the ancient commentators, Śankara and Rāmānuja, there are a large number of modern interpreters. Let us consider the modern interpreters first since they have a non-sectarian approach and then review the ancient commentators in the light of our results.

Among the authors who support the doctrine of theism are Garbe and R.G. Bhandarkar.

Garbe, to support his theory on theism, excludes many passages which show *Mīmansā* and *Vedānta Advaitism* in particular. He also excludes those chapters involving the conception of *traigunya*, the conception of the *vibhūtis*, all references to Brahman equanimity to be attained in yoga. He retains all those chapters which promote theism, moralism as subsidiary to theism, and in particular philosophic devotion. He takes theism for granted and everything which goes against it as an interpolation. In an attempt to prove a pure theism, he excludes the passages which concern sacrifice and offering to the gods as he thinks they defend ritualism. About Kṛṣṇa he thinks that he rose from the conception of a man-God to the conception of God in the course of a progressive movement.[96] Garbe's thesis, in fact, begs the question since he is able to argue for interpolation only on the basis of his thesis.

Edgerton defines the upaniṣadic contribution to the *Gītā* in terms of pessimism, transmigration and salvation through knowledge. In the *Bhagvadgītā*, *karman* and bhakti rise into prominence. "The most important specific principle of the *Gītā* is that of doing good to others treating others as oneself."[97] The point of view of the *Gītā*, again, is mystical rather than rational and ultimately it stresses a reliance on God's grace by faith. Yet Edgerton holds that the god of the *Bhagvadgītā* combines the god-hero of a local tribe, the ritualistic deity of the vedas and the Absolute of the upaniṣads.[98]

Bhandarkar[99] gives a theory which may be regarded as super-theistic and is called by the name of Bhāgavatism or Prapattism. He asserts that *Bhagavadgītā* shows *ekāntika bhakti* which has descended from the *ekāntika dharma* of the *Nārāyaṇīya* section of the *Mahābhārata*. He regards *Gītā* as the earliest exposition

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of the doctrine of *parā bhakti*. He sees in the *Viśvarūpta* shown by Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna in the eleventh chapter, the miniature *Viśvarūpa* shown by the Lord to Vasu Uparicara and then shown to Nārada.[100]

According to Tilak[101] *karma-yoga* is the essence of the *Bhagavadgītā*. Jñāna, bhakti and yoga all point to it as the ultimate goal in life. Let us first examine his doctrine of jñāna which is a means as well as concomitant for the achievement of perfection in karman according to him. In contrast with Śankara, however, jñāna not only means here intellectual or philosophical knowledge but it also means mystical knowledge or realization. The aim of *upāsanā* is to imbibe the nature and form of the Lord, to make one's mind uniform with His nature. This knowledge must be able to permeate the heart. Hence intense and desireless love is necessary in this path of knowledge too. One does not escape the necessity of faith and affection even in this path. But in the process if a devotee takes a human and perceptible form for worship it is called the path of devotion. But Tilak believes that whereas knowledge can become a *niṣṭhā* or the highest state of perfection, devotion can never be so. The ultimate resolution of devotion is into knowledge. But whereas according to Śankara, karman after jñāna is an impossibility. Tilak says that karman must be done even after jñāna. Secondly, whereas Śankara said that *jñāna-karma-samuccaya* is not possible, Tilak considers it possible. Tilak, as we have seen has also fitted bhakti in this process as jñāna without intense love is useless and bhakti can be taken as a means to achieve jñāna. This part would be an unwilling agreement with Śankara. Finally, bhakti is essential for the achievement of any great karman as is proved by the example of many saints.

The attraction of Tilak's view lies not only in its contemporary relevance but in the deeper fact that it is consistent with the dramatic setting of the *Gītā*. Arjuna's *viṣāda* leading to inaction was to be overcome and in this context the doctrines of *karma-sannyāsa* based on Sānkhya were reviewed and reconciled with the claims of ethical action, ultimately in terms of reliance in God.

Ranade regards God vision, God realization and beatification as the highest ends and believes that they are also regarded so in the *Gītā*.[102] He first examines the divine nature of the sacrifice and opines that it can be discussed in three different ways—first with reference to the individual, then with reference to God, and finally with reference to Brahman. With reference to the individual it is a known fact that karman purifies the effect of evil actions.[103] With reference to God (if we regard Him as a personal being) the *Gītā* tells us that if he does not confer on God a part of what God has given him, a man would be acting dishonestly with regard to the Brahman: it says that the omnipresent deity is present in every sacrificial action of ours, *tasmāt sarvagataṁ brahma nityaṁ yajñe pratiṣṭhitaṁ*.[104] After examining the divine nature of the sacrifice, Ranade enumerates the limitations of activism. First, he says that according to *Bhagavadgītā*, *prakṛti* or nature is a powerful instrument.[105] This constitutes a limitation to activism. The same kind of activity cannot be prescribed for all. Secondly, the *Gītā* itself shows the relation-

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ship between action on the one hand and illumination and beatification on the other. The fire of illumination puts a stop to actions and their effects. Similarly he believes that actions come to an end for a man who is merged in the beatific enjoyment of God[106] and believes that these lines tell us in a mystical spirit the powerlessness of actions before God vision and God enjoyment, and says further that they point to the dilemma which presents itself before every person who has made some progress in spiritual life. Whereas Tilak tries to prove the imperativeness of actions even after the attainment of the highest knowledge, Ranade says that the proper meaning of the word jñāna is illumination and believes that illumination never comes fully and finally, that we always keep making an asymptotic approach to illumination but never actually reach it. He quotes Jñāneśavara's saying that there is always the difference between the aspirant and God as between the God of fifteen carets and that of sixteen carets or between the moon on the fourteenth day and the moon on the fifteenth day, and so jñāna is a process and not an event. Hence he does not believe in *jñānottara-karman* and *jñāna-karma-samuccaya*, but opines that we are free to do our actions as we like in the process of attainment of the highest illumination. If we are activists by nature nothing can prevent us from doing action at any stage of our progress towards the path to God realization; if we are contemplatives nothing can stir us from the life of God enjoyment to which we are naturally born and so on. He also appreciates Otto's numinism and the divinization of Śri Aurobindo, as he thinks that they reach the mystical standpoint very closely.

Otto is fomous for his doctrine of the Holy.[107] He regards the Holy as a *sui generis* category of value, distinct from the other categories, moral, epistemic or aesthetic. Otto coined the word *numen* to signify this category of value which is characteristic of religious experience. He regards the numinous as a complex of the feelings of mystery, wonder, power, terror, reverence and joy. All these emotions, it may be recalled, come under the different *rasas* which constitute *parā-bhakti* or intense love of God as conceived in the later *bhakti-śāstra*. Otto also regards the Īśvara of the *Bhagavadgītā* as a peculiar combination of a personal God and the world-plenum. To him personalism and impersonalism do not appear antagonistic. Also the Īśvara of the *Bhagavadgītā* is a wholly transcendent God. We have to reconcile ourselves to the will of this inscrutable entity. Actually there is room for bhakti even in *advaita* of a certain kind as shown by Madhusūdana Sarasvatī and it is this sort of *advaita* bhakti which one can easily find in the *Gītā*. In *advaita* bhakti a devotee becomes so merged in God that he becomes one with Him. Whilst feeling is ecstatically roused, the believer forgets and feels his unity with God and therefore extremely high strung *advaita* ideas can precisely give occasion for the expression of one's own experience.

Otto's search for the essential character of religious experience in the *Bhagavadgītā* leads him to a new appreciation of the element of bhakti in it and this must be held significant.

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Śri Aurobindo sees a perfect synthesis between integral devotion and knowledge and integral works.[108] He says that the aim of a person is not inaction and immersion in the absolute which is eternal and impersonal but a union with the *puruṣottama* through the integrality of our being (we have already seen that the concept of the absolute is the triune unity of the mutable, the immutable and the *puruṣottama* in the *Gītā*). It is true that a man has to rise beyond the ego-self and has to attain the silence of the immutable but the ultimate goal is the union with *puruṣottama* through the integrality of our being. The supreme *puruṣa* is not an entirely a relationless absolute but the seer, creator and the ruler of the world.

To know God integrally is to know Him as one with the self and in all manifestation and all this at the same time. And yet to know Him is not enough unless accompanied by an intense uplifting of the heart and soul Godwards. Unless it arouses an intense love and aspiration, only an intellectual seeing does not mean much. The soul has to realize the truth also that "an all seizing delight in Him, and a deep and moved love and adoration of Him "must be the inevitable result, and that this is the very soul of knowledge. Nor should this "adoration be the isolated seeking of the heart, but an offering of the whole being. Therefore, it must also take the form of sacrifice". We have already discussed before that this sacrifice or work cannot be for a relationless absolute but for the *puruṣottama* who is the perfect personality, capable of all relations, even the most concrete and intimate ones. Works are first done as sacrifice with the idea of ourselves as the doer. Then with the knowledge of *prakṛti* as doer, and lastly with the knowledge of that *prakṛti* as the supreme power of the Divine and a renunciation and surrender of all our actions to Him with the individual as a channel or instrument. Our works then proceed straight from the self and the divine within us as part of indivisible universal action, are initiated and performed not by us but by a vast and transcendent 'śakti'. All that we do is for the Lord seated in us, for the fulfilment of His will in us. In one word, for *puruṣottama* and done really by Him through His universal śakti.

Śri Aurobindo says that the divine way is deeply impersonal because the separateness of ego is abolished for the soul universalized and restored to transcendence. And yet it is intimately personal because it soars to a transcendent passion and power of indwelling and oneness. According to him a supreme spiritual consciousness that is reached through works is no less than through love and knowledge.

It must be admitted that Śri Aurobindo has brought out the inner logic which connects disinterested action with resignation to the will of God. The initial "*Karmaṇyevādhikāraste*" really culminates in "*Māṁ ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja*". The notion of God and devotion to Him, thus, become the essence of the *Bhagavadgītā* and include karman and jñāna in their embrace.

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Śankara's and Rāmānuja's views on the Gītā in the light of the foregoing

For Śankara Arjuna was overtaken by *moha* so Śri Kṛṣṇa dispelled his confusion by a discourse on spiritual knowledge.[109] Arjuna's illusion arose from the belief in the reality of the individual ego and of the actions and their consequences which he contemplated. The knowledge which is given in the *Gītā* is that the true self being the same as the universal self lies eternally beyond actions and their consequences. Action belongs to the veil of *prakṛti* and its guṇas and only the ignorant are bound by them. The wise realize the eternal and universal truth. This is for Śankara the main teaching of the *Gītā*. For him it is directed not to justify action but to show that the wise have no fear of action because in truth they never act. Of course, this process of realization is a long task. The first step in the dispelling of ignorance is to perform one's duties so that the force of passions and desires is put under restraint. Action for the sake of duties alone and with a sense of surrender to the divine purifies the mind. Devotion is a further step in the purification of the mind. It leads to detachment and the grace of God. Śankara declares bhakti as the most important factor leading to jñāna.[110] It is, however, jñāna alone which leads to mokṣa. *Gītā* as *mokṣa-śāstra* is therefore concerned with inculcating jñāna and the means there to. For Śankara karman and bhakti are essentially instrumental. Jñāna is what they lead to and that is knowledge of non-duality. This interpretation of Śankara really emphasises only one aspect of the *Gītā* that of *Sānkhya niṣṭhā*. Since the *Gītā* seeks to reconcile the point of view of *Sānkhya* or knowledge with that of yoga or action, Śankara's emphasis on knowledge receives support from the *Gītā*. Nevertheless, in the *Gītā* the reconciliation of knowledge and action is part of the large theme of the gradual ripening of human aspiration and effort into perfet devotion. The supreme being in the *Gītā* can hardly be conceived as the impersonal Brahman. It remains ultimately the supreme person, *puruṣottama*.

Rāmānuja in contrast clearly understands the *Gītā* as centring in the devotion to God.[111] He understands God as the supreme Lord controlling the individual souls and the world which qualify the unity of reality. On this view, God and the individual soul are not different independent entities but differentiations within the same ultimate reality. While God is the substantive reality, individuals have an adjectival status. It is only through devotion to God that man can get rid of sorrow and reach lasting happiness. For Rāmānuja action as worship is part of bhakti which culminates in the constant remembrance of the Lord and surrender to him. Knowledge on this view is only a guide to proper action and meditation. This view fails to appreciate the problem of action versus knowledge which is so prominent in the *Gītā*. It also fails to appreciate the fact that in the *Gītā*, bhakti is nearer jñāna than karman. Again the concept of *jīvanmukta* in *Gītā* is not consistent with Rāmānuja's theory.

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One cannot escape the feeling that Śankara and Rāmānuja have been concerned more with fitting the *Bhagavadgītā* into their schemes of metaphysics than with deriving it from the *Bhagavadgītā* itself.

Looking back on all the views it can be said that while there is a difference in the practice of karma yoga, jñāna yoga and bhakti yoga, essentially they constitute a unity of three necessarily connected dimensions. They are distinguishable in so far as the different dimensions of the psyche such as conation, cognition and feeling are distinguishable. Nevertheless, they subsist together as aspects of an integral process. "The purity of the will, spiritual illumination of cognition and the manifestation of absolute love are integrally united as successive moments in self-realization".[112]

God is not merely the cosmic power, the creator but the nearest and dearest. The upaniṣads had stressed the unity of the cosmic being and the individual psychic being or ātman. In the *Gītā* the self same supreme being is concieved as eternally related to the individual self as to its own power. The human self and God thus become an inwardly differentiated unity—where God is the substantial reality, Man its eternal mode united to it in a relationship of love.

REFERENCES

1. While speaking of Reality as "one only without a second" (*ekaṁ eva advitīyaṁ*) the upaniṣads too have referred to two forms of brahman, *mūrta* and *amūrta* cf. "*dve eva brahmano rūpe mūrtaṁ caivāmūrtam ca*". *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.*, II, 3, 1. However, it should be noted that the 'form' of brahman does not belong to the 'observable kind'. Though brahman has a 'form', this 'form' is imperceivable and ungraspable; See also, N.A. Nikam, *Some Concepts of Indian Culture*, pp. 48-49.
2. *Gītā*, IV, 6.
3. "*Avyaktā ni gatir duḥkhaṁ dehavadbhiravāpyate*", ibid., XII, 5.
4. Coomaraswamy, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, p. 31.
5. "*Idaṁ śarīraṁ kaunteya kṣetramityabhīdhīyate,*
Etadyo vetti taṁ prāhuḥ kṣetrajña iti tadvidaḥ.
Kṣetrajñam cāpi māṁ viddhi sarvakṣetreṣu bhārata,
Kṣetrakṣetrajñaporjñānaṁ yattajñānaṁ mataṁ mama", ibid., XIII, 1-2.
6. *Dvāvimau puruṣau loke ksaraścāksara eva ca,*
Kṣarah sarvāṇi bhūtāni Kūṭasthokṣara ucyate.
Yasmāt kṣaramatītohaṁ akṣarādapi cottamaḥ,
Atosmi loke vede ca prathitaḥ puruṣottamaḥ". ibid., XV. 16 & 18.
7. Śri Aurobindo, *Essays on Gītā*, Second Series, p. 39; also ch. "The Three Puruṣās".
8. As a friend; *Gītā*, XI, 41-42.
As a guru and father; ibid., XI, 43;
As a loving husband; ibid., XI, 44.

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9. Śri Aurobindo, *Essays on Gītā*, First Series, Ch. XVII, "The Divine Birth and Divine Works", p. 211.
10. Immanence; *Gītā*, VII, 4-12; Transcendence, ibid., VII, 13; All pervading character of the Lord is also seen in the *Gītā*,
"*Yo mām paśyati sarvatra sarvaṁ ca mayi paśyati*
Tasyāhaṁ na praṇaśyāmi sa cha me na praṇaśyati, ibid., VI, 30.
11. "*Ahaṁ Kṛtsnasya jagataḥ prabhavaḥ pralayastathā*",
ibid., VII, 6; See also, ibid., IX, 7.
12. *Gītā*, IV, 1; IV, 6.
13. "*Yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānir bhavati bhārata,*
Abhyutthānaṁ adharmasya tadātmānaṁ sṛjāmyahaṁ". ibid., IV, 7.
14. "*Paritrāṇāya sādhūnāṁ vināśāya ca duṣkṛtāṁ,*
Dharmasaṁsthāpanārthāya saṁbhavāmi yuge yuge", ibid., IV, 3.
15. Aurobindo, *Essay on the Gītā*, First series, Ch. XV; "The possibility and purpose of *Avatārahood*", pp. 180-195.
16. (a) "*Yena bhūtanyaśeṣeṇa drakṣyasyātmanyatho mayi*".
Gītā, VI, 35.
(b) "*Sarvabhūtasthamātmānaṁ sarvabhūtani cā' tmani*
Īkṣate yogayuktātmāsarvatrasamadarśanaḥ". ibid., VI. 29.
(c) "*Yo mām paśyati sarvatra sarvaṁ ca mayi paśyati*
Taṣyāhaṁ na praṇaśyāmi sa ca me na praṇaśyati". ibid., VI, 30.
See also, ibid., XIII, 27, 28.
In the *Gītā*, it is said that the knowledge by which one imperishable is seen in all existence is known as *sāttvikajñāna*, cf. *Gītā*, XVIII, 20.
17. *Vibhūti Yoga*, ibid., Ch. X.
18. Radhakrishnan, *The Bhagavadgītā*, Commentary on Ch. IV, pp. 156-157.
19. Cf. R.D. Ranade, *The Bhagavadgītā*: *Philosophy of God Realization*, p. 175.
20. ibid., p. 176.
21. Śri Aurobindo, *Essays on the Gītā*, First Series, Ch. XVI, pp. 196-208.
22. "*Bahūnāṁ janmanāmante jñānavān māṁ prapadyate*
Vāsudevaḥ sarvamiti sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ".
Gītā, VII, 19.
These lines remind one of certain lines of Vedas and Upaniṣads—
"*Puruṣa evedaṁ sarvaṁ yadbhūtaṁ yacca bhāvyaṁ*," *Ṛg.*, X, 90, 2.
"*Oṁkāra evedaṁ sarvaṁ*", *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, II, 23, 4.
"*sarvaṁ khalvidaṁ Brahma*", *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, III, 14, 1.
23. "*Vasudeva eva mama paramaprāpyaṁ prāpakam ca anyadapi*
yanmanorathavarti sa eva mama tat sarvaṁ". Commentary on *Bhagavadgītā*, VII, 29, p. 246.
24. ibid., p. 203.
25. ibid., VII, 5.
26. ibid., XV, 7.
27. "*Yo yo yāṁ vāṁ tanuṁ bhaktaḥ śraddhayārcitumicchati*
Tasya-tasyācalāṁ śraddhāṁ tāmeva vidadhāmyahaṁ." ibid., VII, 21.
28. "*Sa tayā śraddhayā yuktastasyārādhanamīhate*
Labhate ca tataḥ kāmān mayaiva vihitānhi tān." ibid., VII, 22.

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29. "*Antavattu phalaṁ teṣām tadbhavatyalpamedhasām*
Devandevayajo yāṇti madbhaktā yānti māmapi." ibid., VII, 23.
30. ibid., VII, 19-22.
31. "*Ye yathā māṁ prapadyante tāmstathaiva bhajāmyahaṁ*
Mama vartmānuvartante manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ." ibid., IV, 11.
32. "*Yepyanyadevatā bhaktā yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ*
Te api māmeva kaunteya yajantyavidhi-pūrvakaṁ."
ibid., IX, 23. See also, ibid., IX, 24, 25 and XI, 39.
33. "*Mayyāsaktamanāḥ pārtha yogaṁ yuñjanmadāśrayaḥ*
Asaṁśayaṁ samagraṁ māṁ yathā jñāsyasi tacchṛṇu." ibid., VII, 1.
34. Yoga has many meanings in the *Gītā*. In may mean karma; it may mean *dhyāna yoga*. Here *dhyāna yoga* is meant. Karma is dealt with later.
35. *Gītā*, VI, 19.
36. "*Yatroparamate cittaṁ niruddhaṁ yogasevayā*
Yatra caivātmanātmānaṁ paśyannātmani tuṣyati." ibid., VI, 21.
36. "*Sukhaṁ ātyantikāṁ yattadbuddhigrāhyaṁ atindriyaṁ*
Vetti yatra na caivayaṁ sthitaścalati tattvataḥ." ibid., VI, 21.
37. "*Yogināmapi sarveṣāṁ madgatenāntarātmanā*
Śraddhāvānbhajate yo māṁ sa me yuktatamo mataḥ." ibid., VI, 47.
38. "*Śravanaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ smaraṇaṁ pādasevanaṁ*
Arcanaṁ vandanaṁ dāsyaṁ sakhyamātmanivedanaṁ."
cf. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, VII, 5, 23.
39. "*Anye tveyaṁ ajānantaḥ śrutvānyebhya upāsate,*
Te'pi cā'titarantyeva mṛtyum śruti-parāyaṇaḥ." *Gītā*, XIII, 25.
40. "*Satataṁ kīrtayanto māṁ yatantaśca dṛḍhavratāḥ*
Namasyantaśca māṁ bhaktyā nityayuktā upāsate."
ibid., IX, 14.
41. "*Maccittā madgataprānā bodhayantaḥ parasparaṁ*
Kathayantaśca māṁ nityaṁ tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca." ibid., X, 9.
42. "*Tasmātpraṇamya praṇidhāya kāyaṁ*
Prasādaye tvāmahmīśamīḍyaṁ." ibid., XI, 44.
43. "*Avajānanti māṁ mūḍhā mānuṣīṁ tanumāśritaṁ*
Paraṁ bhāvamajānanto māma bhūtamaheśvaraṁ."
ibid., IX, 11; See also, ibid., IV, 6.
44. ibid., III, 30.
45. "*Patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyaṁ yo me bhaktyā prayacchati*
Tadahaṁ bhaktyupahṛtamaśnāmi prayatātmanaḥ." ibid., IX, 26.
46. ibid., XV, 1.
47. Pandit Damodar Satvalekar, *Śrīmadbhagvadgītā—Puruṣārtha bodhinī bhāṣā tīkā*, p. 602.
48. *Gītā*, XI, 36-46.
49. "*Sakheti matvā prasabhaṁ yaduktaṁ*
He kṛṣṇa he yādava he sakheti,
Ajānatā mahimanaṁ tavedaṁ,
Mayā pramādāt praṇayena vāpi". ibid., XI. 41.
50. ibid., IX, 32.

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51. "*Mān hi pārtha vyapāśritya yepi syuh papayonayah,*
striyo vaiśyastathā śūdrāstepi yānti parāṁ gatiṁ". ibid., IX, 32.
52. "*Sarvakarmāyṇapi sadā kurvaṇo madvyapāśrayah,*
Matprasādād avāpnoti śāśvataṁ padamavyayaṁ".
ibid., XVIII. 56; See also, *Infra.* pp. 124-25.
53. "*Sarvadharmān prityajya māmekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja,*
Ahaṁ tvā sarvapāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ". ibid., XVIII, 66.
54. "*Sudurdarśaṁ idaṁ rūpaṁ dṛṣṭavānasi yanmama*
Devā apyasya rūpasya nityaṁ darśanakānkṣiṇaḥ". ibid., IX. 52.
55. "*Nāhaṁ vedair na tapasā na dānena na cejyayā*
Śakya evamvidho draṣṭuṁ dṛṣṭavānasi māṁ yathā". ibid., XI. 53.
56. "*Bhaktyā tvananyayā śakya ahamevaṁvidho'rjuna*
Jñātuṁ draṣṭuṁ ca tattvena praveṣṭuṁ ca parantapa". ibid., XI. 54.
57. ibid., XIV. 26. *Avyabhicārī bhakti* is also metioned in XIII, 10.
58. Ch. XII of the *Gītā* gives an exposition of the *parābhakti*. After witnessing the world-forms of brahman, Arjuna asks: 'Towards what one's supreme and single minded bhakti be directed; towards the supreme manifest as the world-form or towards the unmanifest? Which of the two is more efficacious?" And Kṛṣṇa explains that both alike secure the supreme attainment of union with Him. But yoga directed towards the unmanifest entails great travail. Verses 13-19 of the XII chapter provide the guidelines to the supreme bhaktas which ensure that the bhakti remains free from bigotry and narrowness.
59. "*Bhaktyā māmbhijānāti yāvānyaścāsmi tattvatah*
Tato māṁ tattvato jñātvā viśate tadrnantaraṁ"
Gītā, XVIII, 55.
60. "*Brahmabhūtaḥ prasannātmā na śocati na kānkṣati*
Samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu madbhaktiṁ labhate paraṁ".
ibid., XVIII, 54. See also, Radhakrishnan, *The Bhagavadgītā*, p. 371.
61. Cf. Śri Aurobindo, op. cit., Second series, p. 345.
62. "*Sukhamātyantikaṁ yattad buddhigrāyamhatīndriyaṁ*
Vetti yatra na cai' vā' haṁ sthitascalati tattvataḥ".
Gītā. VI, 21. See also XIV, 27; The Lord says he is the abode of eternal bliss.
63. "*Yam labdhvā cāparaṁ lābhaṁ manyate nādhikaṁ tataḥ*
Yasim sthito na duḥkhana guruṇā' api vicālyate". ibid., VI, 27.
64. "*Praśāntamanasaṁ hyenaṁ yoginam sukhamuttamaṁ*
Upaiti śānta-rajasaṁ brahmabhūtamakalmaṣaṁ". ibid., VI, 27.
65. Cf. *Gītā*. IV, 35; VI, 29; VI, 30; See also, *supra*, pp. 113-114. fn. 16.
66. "*Yastu sarvāni bhūtani ātmanyevānupaśyati*" *Iśa. Up.* 1. 6.
67. *Gītā*, XI.
68. ibid., XI. 14-23.
69. Madhusūdana Sarasvatī in his *Bhagavadbhakt Resāyana* has three pure *bhakti rasas* and five other *rasas* which can exist in mixed condition with bhakti *Prītibhayānaka* comes under these five. See also, *Gītā*, XI, 36, 45.
70. *Gītā*. II, 52.
71. *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, I. 2. 12.
72. *Gītā*, XIII, 25.

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73. ibid., XVIII. 55.
74. "*Iti kṣetraṁ tathā jñānaṁ jñeyaṁ co'ktaṁ samāsataḥ*
Madbhaktā etadijñāya mad bhāvāyo' papadyate". ibid., XIII. 18.
75. "*Mām ca yovyabhicāreṇa bhaktiyogena sevate*
Sa guṇān samatityai' tan brahmabhūyāya kalpate". ibid., XIV. 26.
76. *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, VI. 22; *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, III, 2, 3. See also, Ranade, *Constructive Survey of Upanisadic Philosophy*. p. 345.
77. Ranade, *Bhagvadgita as a Philosophy of God Realization*, Ch. XIX, pp. 226-27.
78. "*Teṣām satavuktānaṁ bhajatāṁ prīti-pūrvakaṁ*
Dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ yena māmupayānti te". *Gītā* X. 10.
79. "*Teṣāmevā 'nukampārthamadhamajhñānajam tamaḥ*
Nāśayāmyātmabhāvastho jñānadīpena bhāsvatā". ibid., X, 11.
80. "*Tameva śaraṇam gaccha sarva-bhāvena bhārata*
Tatprasādāt parām śāntim sthānam prāpsyasi śāśvatam". ibid., XVIII, 62.
81. "*Maccittaḥ sarvadurgāni matprasādāt tariṣyati*".
ibid., XVIII. 58; cf. "*Tataḥ pratyakcetanādhigamopyantarāyābhāvaṣca*". *Yogasūtras*, 1. 29.
82. "*Caturvidhā bhajante mām janaḥ sukṛtino' rjuna*
Arto jijñasurarthārthī jñānīca bharatarṣabha". *Gītā*, VIII, 16.
83. "*Rājasī tāmasī' śuddhāsāttvikī Miśritā ca sā*
Irṣyajādveṣajā dyā syādbhayajōdveṣajā parā
Harṣajā śuddhasattvotthā kāmaśokādijetarā
Satvajātve tu sarvāsām guṇāhtarakṛti bhidā"
Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, *Bhagavadbhakti rasayana*, II, 41-42.
84. "*Teṣām jñānī nityayuhta ekabhaktirviśiṣyate*
Priyo hi jñānino' tyarthamahaṁ sa ca mama priyaḥ".
Gītā. VII. 17.
85. ibid,, IX. 21.
86. ibid., IX. 22.
87. ibid., XII. 13.
88. ibid., XII. 14.
89. ibid., XII. 15.
90. ibid., XII. 16.
91. ibid., XII. 17.
92. ibid., XII. 18.
93. ibid., XII. 19.
94. "*Yetu dharmyāmṛtaṁ idaṁ yathoktaṁ paryupāsate*
Śraddadhānā matparamā bhaktaste'tīva me priyāḥ". ibid., XII, 20.
95. ibid., XVIII. 52-54.
96. Garbe, *Introduction to the Bhagavadgītā* tr. by N.B. Utgikar, *Indian Antiquary*, 1918. He claims to reduce the 700 verses of the *Gītā* by 170.
97. Edgerton, F., The *Bhagavadgītā*, Pt. II, p. 90.
98. ibid., Pt. II, p. 33.
99. One of the most important contributions of Dr. Bhandarkar is to have argued that there is no reason to postulate a Christian influence on the origin of bhakti in India. R.G. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism Saivism and Other Minor Religious Sects*, pp. 28-29; Lorinser, Weber, Howell and Hopkins have argued

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for a Christian influence on the growth of bhakti generally on the ground of similarities of doctrines, attitudes, and legends. To argue for an influence on the grounds of similarity, however, it must also be proved that the supposed source of influence is more ancient and the similarities are such that an independent origin would be highly improbable. Neither of these two conditons can be established in the present case. Not only can an evolution of bhakti be traced from the Vedas to the *Bhagvadgītā* but the Pre-Christian antiquity of Bhagavatism can hardly be doubted. See also, Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature*, Vol. 1. p. 431, fn. 1; Macnicol, *Indian Theism*, pp. 272-79; H.C. Raychaudhari, *Early History of Vaisnava Sect*, pp. 128-60.

100. As Garbo stands for theism, Holtzmann stands for Pantheism. According to him pantheism was the original portion and theism was added later. The portions which he quotes are the conception of the world soul and the illusory nature of fear and death. Quoted from Ranade, *Bhagavadgītā as a Philosophy of God Realization*, pp. 89-90.
101. Tilak, *Śrimadbhagavadgītā-rahasya*. Vol. II, pp. 662, 663, 667.
102. Ranade, op. cit., pp. 257-276.
103. *Gitā*. IV, 23.
104. ibid., III, 15.
105. Ranade, op. cit., p. 203.
106. "*Yastvātmaratireva syādātmatṛptaśca mānavaḥ,*
Ātmanyeva ca samtuṣṭastasya kāryam na vidyate". *Gītā*, III, 17.
107. Otto, *The idea of the Holy*, pp. 50ff.
Das Bhagavadgita, summarized in Ranade, op. cit., pp. 155ff.
108. Aurobindo, *Essays on Gītā*, Second Series, pp. 390-418.
109. *Commentary on Bhagavadgītā*, Ch. II, following verse 10.
110. Cf. *Vivekacūdāmaṇi*. "*Jñāna Kāraṇa-sāmagrayām bhaktiṛeva garyīasī*".
111. Cf. "*Jñānakarmānugṛhītam bhaktiyogaṁ avatarayāmāsa*".
Commentary on Bhagavadgītā, p. 12.
112. Dr. S.K. Belvalkar points out that nowhere in the *Gītā* it is said that the *summum bonum* is attained by one of the three parallel paths but an emphasis is laid on an intimate coordination of the three in a sort of triune unity. Three objections may be made to this—(a) Kṛṣṇa himself distinguishes in Chapter II between the view-points of *sānkhya* and *yoga* which in Chapters III and IV are respectively designated the pathway of renunciation and the pathway of action and (2) wherein Chapter XIII, *dhyāna, sānkhya* and *karma* are put forth as three alternative modes of realization, (3) The last objection is based upon Chapter XVIII, 50-67. Those favouring trichotomy argue that at the end of the poem the three parallel ways of salvation are enumerated. The jñāna method from Chapter XVIII, 51 to XVIII, 54; bhakti Chapter XVIII, 54 to XVIII, 55; karma Chapter XVIII, 56; to XVIII, 57; after which recommendotion to Arjuna to adopt the last method as regards objection (1) Belvalkar says in Chapters II and III the *Jñānayoga* of the *sānkhya* and the *karmayoga* of the *yogins* constitute *dvividha niṣṭhā*" not "*due niṣṭha*". The goal to be attained and the process of meditation culminating in samādhi are common to both—the only difference being that while the former believes in a formal renouncing of the world, the latter does not think that this is absolutely essential. Only an inward feeling of renunciation is necessary and so it becomes tantamount to 'no action' and so

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lose their binding nature. (2) As regards the passage from Chapter XIII one has to practise deep meditation to realize that the *puruṣa* dwelling within the *prakṛti* is himself the *paramātmā* (XIII, 2.22). One has to practise deep meditation to realize this as an intuitive experience. *Ātmadarśana* can be obtained by following either of the two modes of discipline (XIII.24). But whether we renounce the world or acquire non-attachment, *dhyāna* remains the only method of self-realization. Hence trichotomy of the three is not seen in this passage. (3) As regards the last objection, Belvalkar understands the whole passage (XVIII, 45-65) as one continuous argument setting forth the *karmayogins* path to salvation. Stanzas 45-49 of Chapter XVIII shows that *karmayogin* needs to abandon only *sanga* and *abhimāna* and hence actions amount to 'no action. Such a '*naiṣkarmyasiddhi*' implies and embodies the possession of truest knowledge (XVIII, 50) and therefore leads to *Brahmasākṣātkāra* (XVIII. 50). This *naiṣkarmyāsiddhi* needs the purest *buddhi* (XVIII, 30) and *dhṛti* (XVIII) and *tyāga* (XVIII, 9) and is able to act in the highest *sāttvika* spirit (XVIII, 23) without attachment.

Meditation to realize the highest (XVIII, 52) is to be practised by *karmayogi* who does not renounce as well as by traditional *sānkhya* or *sanyāsa yogi* who takes to *pravrajyā*. Though *Gītā*, however, shows preference to *jñāni bhakta* (VII, 18) it directs the jñāni with panthiestic attitude to develop theistic outlook of a devotee (XVIII, 54-55). See. S. K. Belvalkar, "The Bhagavadgita—Trichotomy Versus Triune unity", *Principal Karmarkar Commemoration Volume*.

It may be recalled that the effort to reach the *Gītā* in terms of a synthesis of the three paths is not just a modern effort. Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, for example, declares that karman, *upāsanā* and jñāna constitute the subjects of the three sections of the *Gītā*, *Kāma-niṣṭhā* and *jñāna-niṣṭhā* constitute the first and the last sections while *bhakti-niṣṭhā* mediates between them because bhakti may be joined to action as well as knowledge. See his *Commentary on Bhagavadgitā*, Upodghāta, vv. 4-8, p. 3.

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5

Bhakti in Buddhism

In a philosophy like that of Buddhism where nothing is regarded permanent in the universe, which believes that unconditioned substances do not exist, which regards each personality as a continuous flowing stream (*saṁtāna*) of dharmas, it was very difficult to concieve of an *Īśvara*. The great Buddhist masters in their texts deny the existence of an *Īśvara* as the creator of the world. Though the Buddha himself recognized the existence of the various gods, he believed that they are subject to coming to be and ceasing to be. These gods in no way correspond to the ethical ideals which the fully developed religions realize in a personal God and his earthly manifestations. Buddha was a rational thinker and he described his religion as 'come-and-see religion' (*ehipassika dharma*) which was to be embraced not out of mere blind faith but out of conviction for its wholesomeness. His instruction to Ānanda clearly shows his attitude in this regard. "Depend on your own self as the light, as the refuge and not on anything else, depend on the doctrine as the light, not on any thing else'.[1]

Nevertheless, we find in Buddhism the notion of a superhuman saviour and teacher who has a necessary compassion (*karuṇā*) and a skill in means (*upāya-kauśalya*) to uplift the suffering mankind. *Saddhā* (skt. *Śraddha*) or Faith is given an esteemed position throughout the Pāli Buddhist literature. As Buddhism does not believe in a creator God, Faith, in the Buddhist sense, means an act of "taking refuge" with the Buddha and also the state of mind which would acknowledge him thus: "the Lord, the *arhat*, the all-enlightened, endowed with knowledge and conduct, the Happy one, knower of the world, supreme charioteer of men to be tamed, teacher of gods and men, Buddha, the Lord".[2] Faith is the first among the five spiritual faculties. We find in Buddhism the full gamut of emotions and attitudes involved in bhakti—*anuṣmṛti*, *śaraṇāgati*, *bhāvanāpūja*, *nāmasmaraṇa*, etc.

On the view upheld in the Hīnayāna schools Buddha is not a God but a super man. He is—as he is himself supposed to have said—the beautiful lotus blossom that grew from the swamp of the world and stands above it. He is said to have said to his disciples that he only shows the way and cannot reach anyone to the destination.[3] His physical relics were worshipped to indicate the pious to ponder over his

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teachings and thus awaken wholesome factors in them. The *Milindapañho* compares the relics with the wooden sticks with which a new fire can be kindled or with a fan by which wind may be summoned, artificially, even though a great fire has died down or a great wind has blown itself out, i.e. the Buddha entered Nirvāṇa; and so the cult of relics is said to be productive of three blessings: liberation, rebirth in heaven or rebirth as a man.[4] The veneration of relic is, therefore, recommended for the laity.[5] Buddha always remained a man for the Theravādins and Sarvāstivādins—though a man of supernatural stature, of unique moral qualities and of inconceivable spiritual and moral powers. The statement about the Buddha's body being just as unclean as that of everybody else shows this beyond doubt.[6] The *Vibhāṣā* says that like that of all other beings the body of the liberated one came into existence through the 'factors of being', i.e. ignorance and thirst for life. Against this view the Mahāsāṁghikas and Sautrāntikas held that the body of one exalted above the world must necessarily be pure.[7] The Andhakas and Uttarāpathakas interpreted this in an unduly materialistic sense and stated that in the case of the Buddha, everything, even his excrements were perfumed.[8] The Andhakas had such a high opinion of Buddha's proclaiming the dharma that they had come to believe that he had preached in a supernatural manner and on supernatural themes only.[9] Some of the Hīnayāna works show a tendency to lift Buddha, even during his earthly life, into wholly transcendental spheres—and thus act as a bridge between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, as in Mahāyāna works this aspect is exclusively emphasized. Quite early it had been stated that a Buddha is to be distinguished from a god, Māra or Brahmā and that he was much superior to them.[10] All of them fell within the phenomenal realm while Buddha was transcendental. It is this very notion which should be taken as the basis for the distinction in Mahāyāna between Buddha's '*svābhāvikakāya*' and his '*dharmakāya*.[11] The *Mahāvastu*, a text of the Lokottarvāda Mahāsāmghika sect, falls in the category of this intermediary literature.[12]

According to this sect the Buddhas are connected only externally with the worldly life, they have no *sāsrava dharmas*, their bodies, their length of life and their power are unlimited, they neither sleep nor dream. They are self-possessed and always in a state of samādhi. They do not preach by name, they understand everything in a moment, until they attain *parinirvāna*, they possess *Ksayajñāna* (knowledge of decay) and *anutpāda jñāna* (knowledge of non-origination). In short everything concerning the Buddhas is transcendental.[13] They conceived of the Buddha docetically and gave rise to the concept of the bodhisattvas. The bodhisattvas, according to them, are supermundane, their birth or body is not a result of sexual intercourse and hence they do not pass through the four embryonic stages of the human beings.[14] They never experience lust, malevolence and injury.[15] For the benefit of all classes of sentient benigs, they are born of their own free will in any form of existence they choose.

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All these conceptions led to the deification of the Buddhas and the bodhisattvas. The *Mahāvastu* elaborately discusses many forms of worship and concludes that "any of these forms of worship can bring the worshipper all kinds of desires and even heavenly objects and he can be free from grief and oppression and can fare on the way to enlightenment. Such a man's virtues cannot be counted in words. The benefactors and worshippers of the Buddha shall never be troubled by any ills of the world and they may become happy and prosperous".[16]

All such docetic tendencies reach their full flowing in the great Mahāyāna work *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka*.[17] In this one of the earliest texts of Mahāyāna Buddhism Śākyamuni is a completely supernatural being who shows his powers by a host of miracles. His earthly existence as the historical Sākyamuni who entered *Nīrvāna* is but an illusion produced by him for the purpose of converting human beings; and the Buddha will bring liberation to all beings for inconceivable periods of time. Bhakti for the Buddha finds full scope here, though according to some scholars, such as Herman Von-Glasenapp,[18] even the Buddha of *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka* cannot be compared with the Lord of theistic religions, as, first, there are innumerable Buddhas, and, further, Śākyamuni has not been the world liberator from the beginning but has attained to this office in time—though it may have been immeasurably long ago. And finally, the activity of Śākyamuni is limited to the soteriological field alone; he has no influence on the creation, rule, or continuation of karma in the world. He agrees with Louis de la Vallee Poussin in saying that there is no place in the *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka* which cannot be adequately interpreted in the orthodox, i.e. non-theistic manner. Śākyamuni is not the father of the world in the sense of the creator of human beings, but because of his teachings he is the father of the holy ones, the further Buddhas.[19] He says that in theory the Buddha differs radically from a theistic God, in religious practice however he admits that within the realm of sentiments on which the *Lotus Sutra* is based, he obviously shares some features with a gracious "Father in Heaven" who is the protector of men in need.[20] But even though the Buddha might not have all the characteristics of a theistic God, he reaches quite near this ideal—we certainly have here the concept of a man-God and the emotions that he evokes in his followers attest all the characteristics of a highly developed stage of bhakti towards a divine saviour. The attitude towards Buddha is compounded of reverence, hope, gratitude, dependence. One takes refuge in the Buddha. Even the doctrine of name is clearly expressed here. The Lord is perfect in six virtues—noble kindness, noble compassion, noble sympathy, noble indifference, has thirty-two signs of a great man, has a golden hue, the ten powers, fourfold absence of hesitation, four articles of sociability, the eighteen uncommon properties, magical powers, ability to save beings in all direction of space.[21]

In this way, with regard to his qualities Buddha is no less than a theistic bhagavān. He performs various miracles. As stated in the *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka*[22] when he enters upon his meditation there falls a great rain of divine flowers, Buddha

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field shakes in six ways, there issues a ray from within the circle of hair between the eyebrows of the Lord and extends over eighteen hundred Buddha-fields in eastern quarters. People hearing him see the apparition of precious stūpas,[23] through his power the daughter of nāga king becomes a male and hence able to become a bodhisattva when she presents a gem to Lord.[24]

Buddha proclaims a very personal relationship with his devotees in Chapter III of *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka*. After telling a parable of a man who saved his sons, who were too busy playing inside, from the house on fire by promising them beautiful toys so that they could come out of the house, he says, "In the same manner Sāriputra, I, the great seer, am the protector and father of all beings and all the creatures who childlike are captivated by the pleasures of the triple world are my sons". This parable also shows the *Upāya Kauśalya* of the Lord.

His attitude towards all men is the same, as a cloud has the same attitude towards all plants.[25] He says "I have the same feeling for respectable people as for the low, for moral persons as for immoral".[26] He says in the same chapter—"I shall refresh all beings whose bodies are witnessed, who are clogged to the triple world. I shall bring to felicity those that are pining away with toils, give them pleasure and final rest". He declared boldly—"I am the *tathāgata*, the Lord who has no superior, who appears in this world to save".

Similarly, we see a deep devotion for the Lord by his disciples. The story of the devotion of Bhaiṣajyarāja is an ideal example for this.[27] He burns his body in order to offer worship to the *tathāgata* and *dharmaparyāya*. Then all the Lords shout in applause and say that this was real heroism and real worship of the *tathāgata*. Then in his second birth he weeps and laments for him and pays worship to the relics of the Lord and in the presence of eighty-four thousand stūpas burns his arm which was full with auspicious signs. This shows intense love for the *tathāgata* and we are reminded of similar stories in the *Mahābhārata*. Let us also examine the bodhisattvas' attitude towards the disciples. We know that whereas Hīnayāna assumed the popular Gods as the dispenser of worldly blessings, Mahāyāna supplemented these by the conception of the helpful *bodhisattvas* along with the Buddha. For ordinary men and women to develop devotion and respect for a religion, a religion should also promise the fulfilment of their worldly desires too. Secondly, almost in every religion we find certain personalities, saints, lower *devātas* which provide a link with God. In Christianity and Islam saint worship is popular. The Buddhists invented this class of saints (bodhisattvas) chiefly by personifying the different virtues of Buddha's personality—as Dr. Hardayal points out in his *The Doctrine*.[29] Hence Mañjuśrī is a personification of wisdom (*prajñā*) and Avalokiteśvara that of compassion (*karuṇā*) respectively. The highest qualities of a bodhisattva were regarded as wisdom and compassion.[30]

In Chapter XXIV of the *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka*, which contains a description of the transformation of Avalokiteśvara, it is said that he has the power to save

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anybody—if a man is entrapped in great fire, he is saved by him from there; if a man given up to the capital punishment implores him, the swords of the executioners would snap asunder, even if he be bound in wooden or iron menacles, be he guilty or innocent, all the fetters would give way as soon as Avalokiteśvara's name is pronounced; those who act from the impulse of hatred, their impulse will disappear; a woman desiring a male or female child would get what she desires; and so on.[31]

Devotion to Buddha may be expressed by causing musical instruments to be played at such places. Even by offering a single flower, by worshipping with distracted thought can a person in course of time see *koṭīs* of Buddhas.[32] The passage gives expression to the same sentiment which we notice in a famous verse of the *Gītā* wherein Kṛṣṇa has said : "Whosoever offers Me with love a leaf, a flower, a fruit or even water, I appear in person before that devotee of purified intellect, and delightfully partake of that article offered by him with love."[33]

The *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka* also says that on any spot of the earth where *dharma-parvāya* is expounded preached, written, etc. one should build a *tathāgata-shrine*. Any spot of earth where *dharma parvāya* is taught must be honoured, revered and worshipped as if it were a stūpa.[34]

Method of worship

The methods of worshipping the Lord also resemble those of the theistic sects. It is said in the *Lotus Sūtra* that by erecting stūpas of various materials either by costly metals, precious stones or by ordinary things like brick and clay or even when little boys playing erect stūpas of sand, they attain enlightenment. The same is the case with the images of *sugatas*—they can be made with precious metals or even with ordinary things and those who make them attain enlightenment.

Secondly, worship is practised by offering flowers or perfumes to the relics of the *tathāgata*, to stūpas, images of clay, or those drawn on the wall. This method of worship reaches nearer the theistic ones in the later Mahāyāna. If we examine the *Bodhisattva caryā* of the later Mahāyāna, we see that the Buddhist teachers were not satisfied with prescribing only *gotra* and *adhimukti* as the necessary preliminaries to *Bodhisattva Cittotpāda*. They introduced more devotion and ritual and also propounded the ideas of sin and confession. It is not that all these ideas are entirely new. For example, the advantages emanating from the confession of sin made in true repentance are clearly recognized in the *Vinaya*, the monastic code of the Buddhists, and the act of confession is given a due place in the monastic discipline.[35] It may be assumed, therefore, that all these ideas along with many others were contained in the Hīnayāna in seed from which the Mahāyāna inherited and elaborated further. This development is seen in the *Darma sangraha*, the *Śikṣā Samuccaya* and Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, the last one being the most important of all. A bodhisattva must perform the following religious exercises, before he can attain to the thought of Enlightenment, in other words *anuttara-pūjā*[36] after *gotra* and *adhimukti*.

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(a) *Vandana* and pūjā (obeisance and worship)—worship and adoration of the Buddhas, the bodhisattva and the doctrine. Śāntideva is the main representative of this emotional Buddhism. In the second canto of the *Bodhi-caryāvatāra*, he sings a hymn of love and adoration for the Buddhas and the bodhisattvas. He lavishly offers them everything that is beautiful and expensive, all flowers, fruits, jewels, gem producing mountains, woods and forests, creepers, fruit-laden trees, celestial perfumes and incense, wish fulfilling tree of heaven, lakes adorned with lotuses and swans, etc. True spirit of devotion is seen in these lines of Śantideva—"I give myself to the Jinas. I give myself entirely and utterly to their sons (i.e. the bodhisattvas). O noble beings, take possession of me. I shall become your slave through love."[37] He then declares that he would gladly render humble service to the Buddha and the bodhisattvas—would prepare their bath, massage their bodies, spread perfumes over them, etc.[38] This reminds us of the worship of *āḷvārs* which is quite similar.[39]

(b) *Śaraṇāgamana* (taking refuge)—Śāntideva repeats the formula of taking refuge in the Buddha, the doctrine and the bodhisattvas. Though the threefold formula dates from a very ancient period, the Mahāyānists had substituted bodhisattvas for sangha. The triad is known as *triratna*. The novices have to confess their faith in these three jewels before proceeding to the higher duties.

(c) *Pāpa- deśanā* (Confession of sins)—The poet confesses his sins and declares that he is a sinner and promises not to sin again and takes refuge in the bodhisattvas for protection and help. These prayers of confession add a true colour of bhakti to Mahāyāna—

"I am a brute: whatever sins I have committed or caused others to commit either in this life or in the endless series of previous existences, and whatever sins I have approved all those sins I confess. I am consumed with remorse and I have earned death through my folly.

O Leaders, whatever sins I have committed with my body, speech and mind against the three jewels, or my parents or my teachers, or others, I confess them all now. I am a sinner soiled with many transgressions.

How shall I escape from this? I am always beset by fear and anxiety lest I should die soon before the burden of my sin is diminished".[40]

He invokes the bodhisattva to save him. He promises to follow the Buddha's teachings. He is mortally afraid of the pain of rebirth in purgatory and again confess all his transgressions against natural law and against the rules and precepts of the Buddhist community and ends by declaring that he should sin no more,

As Hardayal says, here the ideals of self-reliance and personal retribution are discarded and the bodhisattvas and invoked to save a sinner from the evil consequences of his deeds. It is assumed that frank confession is meritorious and can induce the bodhisattvas to help him. This trend of thought reminds us of the ancient vedic hymns to Varuṇa and the later devotional literature of the Hindu sects, like

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the Vaiṣṇavas and the Śaivas[41]. Hardayal says that in early Buddhism also we see King Ajātasatru confessing his sin before the Buddha and the Buddha "accepted the confession" but it is not very clear that the iron law was effectively relaxed in favour of erring humanity before bhakti came to be regarded as an easy and alternative device to escape pain and attain felicity. In the later Buddhist literature repentance and confession are held to absolve the sinner from the sin and its punishment. They can at least mitigate the disastrous consequences of sin. As many as thirty-five Buddhas are supposed to hear the confession.[43]

(d) *Pūṇyānumodana* (rejoicing in the God)—Śāntideva says that he rejoices in thinking of the deeds of all beings, of the liberation obtained by the *arhats* and of the spiritual heights attained by the bodhisattvas and the Buddhas.[44]

(e) *Adhyeśaṇā and Yācanā* (Prayer and supplication)—Śāntideva prays and implores all the Buddhas to preach the true doctrine and not to disappear in the final nirvaṇā. The people would remain blind if they do not receive the final instruction from the Buddhas.[45]

(f) *Pariṇāmanā and Ātmabhāvādi-parityāga* (Declaration of altruism and self-denial)—This stage immediately precedes the *Cittodpāda* and has been described as *pariṇāmanā* (the transference of one's merit for the welfare of others) and *ātmabhāvādi-parityāgaḥ* (renunciation of one's body or of oneself). These terms have been invented by late commentators and the *Dharmasaṅgraha* puts *pariṇāmanā* after the attainment of enlightenment.[46] Śāntideva gives us a magnificent catechism of love and charity in his *Bodhicaryāvatāra*.[47]

After *gotra*, *adhimukti* and *anuttara-pujā* comes the event of the Rising of the thought of Enlightenment (*Bodhicittotpāda*), with which the devotee gets transformed into a bodhisattva, obviously, the moment of the rising of the thought of Enlightenment is of the highest importance in the life of a devotee and he rejoices that his birth has now become fruitful and that he was born into the race of the Buddhas, in which alone the attainment of the bodhisattvahood is possible. Now onwards, the devotee starts making rigorous efforts to intensify his aspiration to realize the transcendental by a systematic reflection on the true nature of the phenomenal world, which is evanescent, full of pains and miseries, wherein all happiness ends in sorrow and the fear of death is the most tortuous fact. This reflection on the evil nature of mundane existence is, however, not aimed at creating a feeling of aversion in the mind of the devotee towards life but evoking in him a feeling of compassion for his fellow-beings, who are still under the spell of ignorance. This intensifies his feeling of love for them so much so that he declares in the words of the *Bodhisattva-bhūmi*: "O may I attain supreme and perfect Enlightenment, promote the good of all beings, and establish them in the final and complete nirvāṇa and in the Buddha-knowledge".[48] Lest he might not relapse from this state and, further, his resolve to attain the supreme Enlightenment, i.e. Buddhahood be strengthened, he, then, takes a number of vows (*praṇidhāna*).

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The *daśabhūmikā Sūtra* has listed ten *praṇidhānas* which the bodhisattva has to make and one of these is to provide for the worship of all the Buddhas without any exception.[49] It is quite clear how much important the element of worship has become in the Mahāyāna form of Buddhism. In course of time, *pranidhāna* was finally incorporated in the list of the bodhisattva's *halas*, *vaśithās* or the *paramitās*.

A bodhisattva then must declare his *praṇidhāna* in the presence of a living Buddha who then predicts his future success in attaining Enlightenment: This is called *vyākaraṇa* or *vyākṛti*. This is common in *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka* but Śāntideva does not attach much importance to this.

After this stage a bodhisattva is fit to commence his *caryā*. In the *Bodhisattva Bhūmi* it is divided into (i) *boddhipakṣya caryā*—in which one practices the thirty-seven *bodhipakṣya dharmas* (four *smṛti upasthānas*, four *samyak balas*, four *ṛddhipādas*, five *indriyas*, seven *bodhyaṅgas*, and the eightfold noble way); (ii) five *palasa bhijñā caryā* (practice of super knowledge; (iii) *pāramita caryā* (practice of perfection); (iv) *sattva-paripāka-carva* (practice of maturing the living being, i.e. preaching and teaching).

In *abhijñā-caryā* we see that as regards the performance of miracles the bodhisattvas are as capable as the Buddhas. The six *abhijñās* which they acquire are *divyacakṣus* (supernal organ of sight) *divya srotra* (supernal organ of hearing), *paracittajñāna* (the discernment of knowledge of the mind or the thought of others), *pūrvanivā-sānusmṛtijñāna—cyutyut pādajñāna* (seeing death and birth). Possession of *ṛddhis* enabled him to perform numerous miracles by which he could transform or create anything. It was, thus, of two types *ṛddhi pariṇāmikī* and *ṛddhi nairmāṇikī*. In the first category come such wonders as emitting flames from mouth, transmiting the four elements into one another, making all things and forms enter his body, make himself visible and invisible, etc. and in the second such as creating a phantom body, creating a voice, etc.

The sixth is *āsravakṣya Jñāna* by which he frees himself from all the *āsravas*. Bodhisattva acquires ten *vaśitās—āyurvaśitā*, *cetovaśitā*, *pariṣkāra vaśitā*, *karma vaśitā*, *upapatti vaśitā*, *adhimukti vaśitā*, *praṇidhāna vaśitā*, *ṛddhi vaśitā*, *dharma vaśitā*, *Jñāna vaśitā*. These *vaśitās* are also wonderful powers and are enumerated in the *Daśa-bhūmi*, *Mahāvyutpatti* and *Dharma saṅgraha*.

The five *indriyas*, and the five *balas*, which have the same names, are included among the thirty-seven *bodhi-pakṣīya dharmas*. These are (i) *śraddha*, (ii) *vīrya*, (iii) *smṛti*, (iv) *samādhi* and (v) *prajñā*.

We are concerned here with *śraddhā*. "What is *śraddhā*?" asks Śāntideva in his *Śikṣāsamuccaya* (*Akṣaya matisūtra*) and answers that by faith one has faith in four dharmas. Which four ? He accepts the right view which assumes a transmigration in the world of birth and death; he puts his trust in the ripening of karma; he has faith in the mode of life of a bodhisattva and having taken up this discipline he does not long for any other vehicle. He believes when he hears all the doctrines which

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are characterized by the true, clear and profound knowledge of conditioned co-production by such terms as lack of self, absence of a being, absence of a soul, absence of a person and by emptiness, the signless and the wishless. He believes in all the qualities of a Buddha, his powers, his grounds of self-confidence and all the rest and when in his faith he has left behind all doubts he brings about himself those qualities of the Buddha. This is known as the virtue of faith.[51]

Śraddhā is said to be recommended by Gautama Buddha himself as the starting point of a pious Buddhist's life in the new faith. The *Lalita Vistara* speaks of it as the first necessary condition for receiving religious instructions.[52] Similarly, when he exhorts Nanda in the *Saundarānanda Kāvya* he puts *śraddhā* in the first place : 'cultivate first the *indriya* or *śraddhā*.'[53] Almost all the Buddhist writers have sung the praises of *śraddhā* : it leads to inviolable aspiration[54] and enables a bodhisattva to escape the power of evil.[55] However, it must be rooted in righteousness.[56] It is indeed the most excellent of all possessions.[57] He who has faith will be rich in virtues. Faith gives constancy, and strength.[58] It is a rare gift which is not easy to come by. *Śraddhā* is so blessed that she should be accorded divine honours and worshipped as a Goddess.[59] Faith is like a ship in which a bodhisattva can safely enter the great ocean of virtue and merit, but if he makes a shipwreck, he cannot acquire supreme virtue.[60] Without faith no one can start on the long career of the bodhisattva, which begins with the "Thought of Enlightenment". Faith is the root of that idea.[61] It is the parent of all the virtues, it dispels all doubts and shows us the city of Bliss.[62]

According to Hardayal, the idea of bhakti is found in the *Pālī Nikāyas* and was called *saddhā* in the fifth century B.C.[63] The basic act of taking refuge with the Buddha, dharma and the saṅgha should not be under-estimated. According to him personalities play a great part in all the religions and in the Pāli canon Gautama Buddha is the centre of the whole movement and the doctrine derives its vitality and importance from his personality. When the Christians love and exalt Jesus Christ and Moslems praise and glorify their Prophet, they evince personal bhakti which can be justified by an appeal to history and psychology and even if the Buddha had advanced no extraordinary claims on his behalf, his greatness as a man would have given rise to the cult of bhakti for him. Buddhism had already reduced the great Hindu *devas* to a subordinate position, but they like all human beings had hearts as well as brains and the heart demands its rights whatever the logic might say and so they substituted the Buddha in the *devas*' place.

The veneration of higher beings is actuated by a deeply rooted need of the human beings, which is to look up to a personified ideal, "man inclines towards veneration", says Goethe. In theistic religions this is projected on to a God, or to his incarnation in this world. In Buddhism, Buddha is the ideal of perfection. In him the believers behold all that is good, true and beautiful and they offer their veneration to him.

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But opinion is divided among scholars as to whether *śraddhā* of the Pāli *Nikāyas* could be taken in the sense of bhakti. According to Edward Conze,[64] the basic act of taking refuge in the Buddha, dharma and saṅgha essentially implies trust in the Buddha as 'saviour' in the strictly limited sense, that he had discussed the doctrine (dharma) which if properly applied must undoubtedly lead to salvation. But we can agree that more than this is implied in the Mahāyāna use of the term when Avalokiteśvara, etc. are regarded as 'saviours'. They effect the salvation of beings by more than the enunciation of a transcendental doctrine. In fact they rather exert the three functions of the Blessed Lord which are enumerated in the *Bhagavadgītā*.[65]

In Mahāyāna we see that a simple act of faith, when turned on the Buddha or a proclamation of his dharma, produces an inconceivable amount of merit which may outweigh countless moral defaults. Edward Conze further says that a well-known stanza[66] tells that the Buddha is inconceivable and so is his dharma and in consequence faith in the inconceivable also produces an inconceivable reward. The commentary explains inconceivable (*acintya*) as that which seems incredible to believers, and alludes to what is said in a *sūtra* about the enormous consequences of one single thought of faith.[67] In the *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka* also we see that even by offering a single flower shall one in course of time see *koṭis* of Buddhas.[68] Further, in Chapter XVII of the same text it is stated that if someone hears the discourse on the law for a single moment, he will in his next existence possess carriage, yoked with bullocks, horses and celestial aerial cars. Even if someone is able to persuade another to listen to it even for a single moment then the former will attain the advantage of association with a bodhisattva who has acquired *dhāraṇī*, his features will become perfect and so on.[69]

Hence we can say that though the word faith might be said to signify only an intellectual belief in a doctrine, yet it is a necessary pre-requisite of loving devotion, and in a number of contexts it can be taken as devotion also.

The doctrine of faith reached its culmination in the *sukhāvatī vyūha* of the pure Land Sect. This sect believed that salvation is to be attained "through absolute faith in another's power" and lays emphasis on the repetition of the formula '*Namo Amitābhāya Buddhāya*.'[70]

Corresponding to the doctrine of grace we have the doctrine of *karuṇā* here. The great virtue *karuṇā* is an attribute of the perfect Buddha and the budding bodhisattva. In early Buddhist texts, however, the term *anukampā* is generally used for compassion and it holds the key position in the article. In a short but lucid article I.B. Horner has written:

> The Buddha urged his first five followers—all of them *arhats*—to go forth and teach out of *anūkampā* for the world (*Vīnaya, Mahāvagga*. I. ii. 1). He is further recorded to have said: "Any one speaking truly of me would

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> say, 'A being not liable to intellectual confusion, has arisen in the world—out of *anukampā* for the world' (*Majjhima, Sutta* 4). He also, out of *anukampā* for his disciples, put before them the aim of becoming heirs of *dhamma* in him, not heirs of material things of the world (*Majjhima Sutta* 3). And again in pointing out to them empty places in which to meditate, he said on a number of recorded occasions: "All that teachers can do out of *anukampā* for their disciples, that I have done for you; meditate, monks." And so on.[71]

It is mentioned in an enormous number of passages in all the principal treatises and occurs most frequently in Mahayanic literature. According to the *Prajñā Pāramitā Sūtra* a bodhisattva shows his *karuṇā* by resolving to suffer the torments and agonies of the dreadful purgatories during innumerable aeons, if need be, so that he may lead all beings to perfect Enlightenment. He desires enlightenment first for all beings, not for himself. He is consumed with grief on account of the sufferings of others and does not care for his own happiness.[72] He loves all beings as a mother loves her childern.[73] He is like a mother and father, relative, friend, slave, teacher for all beigns.[74]

In the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*[75] the Lord compares the bodhisattva to an excellent hero. He says that as the hero would not desert his family while taking it through a frightful forest similarly a bodhisattva is also a compassionate hero, who is full of pity and concerned with the walfare of beings who dwell in friendliness, compassion, sympathetic joy and evenmindedness. Āryaśūra and Śāntideva exalt *karuṇā* above all other virtues. This virtue itself was developed by *dāna*. In innumerable parables we see heroes and heroines of stories giving away wealth, limbs, lives, wives and children when they are motivated by *karuṇā*.

According to Hardayal, in early Mahāyāna wisdom and mercy are regarded as equally important and a bodhisattva must possess the double equipment of knowledge and merit (*jñāna saṁbhāra* and *puṇya saṁbhāra*).[76] In fact wisdom is regarded as more important than mercy. The glorification of wisdom reaches its climax in the writings of *Mādhyamika* school where *prajñā* is extolled more than mercy. But the later Mahāyāna emphasizes mercy more than wisdom. It sometimes seems to ignore wisdom altogether as when it declares that *karuṇā* is the one thing needful for a bodhisattva.[77]

Mañjuśrī represents wisdom and Avalokiteśvara *karuṇā*. In the early Mahāyāna we see an oligarchy of bodhisattvas and eight are mentioned as a group of equal rank perhaps Mañjusri is regard as the *primus inter pares*. In the later Mahāyāna, the oligarchy is changed into a monarchy wherein Avalokiteśvara is the first and the rest are nowhere. He absorbs all virtues, powers, functions and prerogatives of other bodhisattvas, because he is the Lord of Mercy. He reigns without a rival.[78] He is prominent in the supplementary portions of the *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka Sukāvatī Vyūha* and the *Kāraṇḍa Vyūha*. In the *Mahāvyutpatti* he stands at the head of a list of

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ninety-one Buddhas. His apotheosis culminates in his identification with the spirit of the universe and in bestowing on him all the attributes of Brahma and Īśvara.

While discussing *śraddhā* we said that the doctrine of faith reached its culmination in the Pure Land School, according to which salvation is to be attained through "absolute faith in another's powers". In this school, hence, the bodhisattva, by virtue of his *karuṇā* or grace can give salvation. Let us examine the problem of grace in Budhhism. The problem of antithesis between the Buddhism of Faith and hence of grace and that of self exertion, the first represented by the Pure Land School and the second by Zen, has puzzled many scholars.[79] But, according to Edward Conze, there is no real opposition between the two. He says that those who exert themselves must have plenty of faith to induce them to turn their energies in that direction and that those who wait for Amitābha to take them to paradise will have plenty of opportunity to exert themselves when they get there. He further says that salvation can be seen from three points of view—(a) result of external personified agent accepted in faith, (b) result of self striving guided by an infallible teacher, (c) as the doing of the absolute or *dharmadhātu* with which Amitābha is identified. Of the three the third would be the most valid as against the first it is based on wisdom and against the second it realizes that no one can really rely on a self which is a mere fiction and a pun if an individual is unlikely to have the strength to direct his own destiny. As for division of (a) and (b) view-points mystics generally tend to bless the dividing lines between the external and internal: "Look within, thou art Buddha".[80]

Hence this doctrine of grace or *karuṇā* brings Buddhism very near the theistic religions. Of course, the Buddhists distinguish between *karuṇā* and *mahākaruṇā*. *Karuṇā* is *sattvālambna*, i.e. directed towards persons and thus belongs to the level of human awareness. *Mahākaruṇā* is *dharmalambana*, i.e. to say it arises from the perception of the true nature of things which are transient.[81] In other words *mahākaruṇā* is the necessary outcome of *mahāprajñā*.[82]

We have seen in the beginning, how in a philosophy like Buddhism, which denied the existence of an Īśvara as the creator of the world, the notion of a super human saviour developed, how the concept of Buddha evolved from that of a human being to that of a man-God, how in Buddhism in a few centuries we see the full gamut of emotions and attitudes involved in bhakti, and how, instead of a mere worship of relics and symbols, the image-worship of Buddha was seen in a full-fledged form. The notion of Buddha as a supernatural person and all these new tendencies were justified by certain philosophical changes in Buddhism during these centuries especially by the concept of *trikāya*.

We have seen that the Theravādins and the Sarvāstivadins treated their Buddha as essentially human with some supernatural qualities. It was the Sautrantic school which brought about a change in view. The Vaibhāṣikas considered nirvaṇa as a reality but lifeless though inexpressible reality and their

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Buddha also disappeared in such a nirvāṇa.[83] The Sautrāntikas disapproved of this and said that the nirvāṇa should be conceived wholly nihilistically.[84] They, however, admitted the existence of Buddha's cosmic body (*dharmakāya*). They interpreted *dharmakāya* as a series of pure dharmas or the transformation of the substratum of the psychophysical organism.[85]

We have seen that the Mahāsāṁghikas considered everything related to the Buddhas as supernatural and they also gave rise to the concept of the bodhisattvas. They took up the question of *kāya* in right earnest, and paved the way for the speculation of the Mahāyānists.[86]

In the early *Mahāyāna sūtras* this was only adumbrated here and there without being fully formulated. It was not until the Yogācāra philosophy began to be crystallized into the system of Asanga and his followers that the conception of the triple body came to form a part of their programme.

The early Hīnayānists had conceived of only two *kāyas*, viz. "Buddha's *rūpakāya*, as that of a human being, and his *dharmakāya* as the collection of his dharmas, i.e. doctrines and disciplinary rules collectively."[87] The early Mahāyānic texts show, on one hand, that the early Hīnayānic texts regarding Buddha as a man of flesh and blood were wrong, and they introduced two conceptions of *nirmānakāya* and *buddhakāya*. Whatever is said to have been done by Śākyamuni is the apparent doings of a created body of the shadowy image created to follow the ways of the world (*lokānuvartana*) so that people might be convinced that Buddhahood is not an impossibility. Their *nirmāṇakāya* concept is the same as that of the Mahāsāṁghikas who had first said that Śākyamuni is only a created body, *nirmāṇakāya*, while the real Buddha is *lokottara* or transcendental.

Their conception of *dharmakāya* was used in two senses in the beginning : body of dharma (collection of practices which makes a being a Buddha) and the metaphysical principle underlying the universe—the Reality (*tathatā*). This concept was developed by the Mādhyamikas.[88] A follower takes refuge in *dharmakāya*, it is in the Buddha nature in which he takes refuge. But the Mādhyamikas developed the theory of *dharma-nairātmya* in a different way. From the point of view of empirical reality they believed in *svabhāva-śūnyatā* of all things and from the point of view of the absolute they believed in *prapañca-śūnyatā*. Buddha is conceived in the Hīnayāna as the ultimate goal of the world's progress, realized in a continuous stream of existence (*bhava saṁtati*). He can really exist so far as this progress really exists; but an independent existence of both is impossible because being interdependent they are correlative and hence not absolutely real. Only ignorance can imagine that the Hīnayānist Buddha has real existence of his own.[89] The Mahāyānist Buddha is above all possible determination (*niṣprapañca*). Nāgārjuna says that neither is the Buddha relational nor non-relational nor both at once, nor neither.[90] Such characteristics are also conventional (*prajñapti*). They are imputed characteristics (*āropita vyavahāraḥ*). The real Buddha must be perceived directly by

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intuition. If Buddha's existence is insisted then his non-existence after nirvāṇa must also be conceded. But if the relativity of the conception is realized never will the question about his existence occur. Buddha is merged quiescent in nature and beyond all possible determination. Those who proceed to dichotomise him as eternal or non-eternal, existent or non-existent, relative or non-relative, omniscient or non-omniscient, are all misled by words.[91] They have no direct intuition of the absolute Buddha. The Hīnayānists do not see the Buddha directly but wish to see him conceptually. Buddha must be regarded as the cosmical order (*dharmataḥ*), his body is the cosmos (*dharmataḥ*). The reality of the Buddha is the reality of the universe, and as far as the Buddha does not have any separate reality, neither has the universe apart from him.[92] All the elements of existence when lifted through the principle of relativity become resplendent. All the millions of existence (*bhūtakoṭi*) must be regarded as the body of the Buddha manifested in them (*tathāgato yatsvabhāvas-tatsvabhāvamidaṁ jagat*).[93] This is the Buddha conceived as *dharmakāya*.

The Yogācāra school distinguishes the gross *rūpakāya* from the subtle *rūpakāya* which was the *lokottara* Buddha of the Mahāsāṁghika; it named the former *rūpa* or *nirmānakāya* and the latter *saṁbhogakāya*. Their concept of *dharmakāya* also differs from that of the Mādhyamikas—as for them reality as pure consciousness, undifferentiated into subject and object, was identified with the *dharmakāya*.[94]

Though we have seen that this concept of refulgent Buddha had already found currency in the *prajñā-pāramitās*, but in them the expression *saṁbhogakāya* does not occur. The original *prajñāpāramitā* regarded this refulgent *kāya* as *nirmita* and included it in *rūpakāya* and hence did not introduce a third *kāya*. That is the reason why Nāgārjuna in *Mahāprajñā-pāramitāśāstra* does not mention it.[95]

The *Lankāvatāra* presents us first with this conception calling it *niṣyanda* or *dharmatā niṣyanda-Buddha*.[96] The idea of *dharmakāya* is also found in this text but not as the triple body dogma. What corresponds to *dharmakāya* is found in the conception of *dharmatā-Buddha*, *tathāgata-jñāna-Buddha* or as *mūlatathāgata*. *Dharmatā-buddha* means Buddha whose essence is reality itself and from whom all other Buddha-personalities flow.

The *Svarṇaprabhāsa* tells us that the *saṁbhogakāya* is a very subtle body of the Buddha, endowed with *mahāpuruṣa* signs.[97] The *Siddhi* says that there are two *saṁbhogakāyas* called *para-saṁbhogakāya* and *sva-sambhogakāya*.[98] The former is seen by bodhisattvas while the latter is seen by Buddhas of the various *lokadhātus* and not by bodhisattvas. As regards refulgence, illimitability, immeasurability there is no difference between the two. The *para-saṁbhogakāya* has the *mahāpuruṣa-lakṣaṇa* while the *sva-saṁbhogakāya* does not. The *citta* of the former is unreal like *nirmāṇakāya* while that of the latter real. Nalinaksha Dutt points out that the conception of the *svasaṁbhogakāya* shows a tendency of the Yogācāra school to posit something, like the Īśvara of the upaniṣad, behind the phenomenal universe.[99]

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D.T. Suzuki makes the *dharmakāya* much more personal instead of regarding it as the idea of suchness. He insists that to suchness is added a living spirit with virtues. "*Dharmakāya* is literally a body or a person that exists as principle and it has now come to mean the highest reality from which all things derive their being and lawfulness but which in itself transcends all living conditions. It is what essentially constitutes Buddhahood"[100] *Dharmakāya* is an inexhaustible fountainhead of love and compassion (this is also the teaching of Shingon). The *dharmakaya* is the *raison d'etre* of all beings, transcends all modes of *upāya*, is free from desires and struggles and stands outside the pale of our finite understanding.[101] If one wants to understand the true nature of *dharmakāya* in a more concrete form, it may be spoken of as the Absolute Person wherein wisdom and compassion are united not mathematically but spiritually.[102]

There are two ways of stressing one conception—(a) *Dharmakāya* is suchness, the body of the law, the impersonal absolute. (b) Womb of *Tathāgata*, true knowledge and the source of every individual being underlying all phenomenon, endowed with love, compassion and will, therefore, personal.[103]

As the *dharmakāya* is identified with the absolute and is connected with the phenomenal, hence the idea developed that it can descend to earth as the saviour of mankind. Whenever it decides to come down to earth in human form it conjures up a phantom body called *nirmāṇakāya*. This concept was however not a new one evolved by the Buddhists but a common property of all the ancient philosophic systems of India. In the *Yogadarśana* it is interpreted as a body or a series of bodies assumed at will by a *yogi*. In Mahāyāna the object of Buddhas assuming a *nirmāṇakāya* is said to be the service of the entire creation (*sattvārthā*).

Later the ideal of *saṁbhogakāya* was also evolved as the Buddha ideal who enjoyed a refulgent body and preached to the bodhisattvas. It is a symbol of transcendental perfection and personified wisdom—the body of Recompense or the body of Bliss. On the one hand it is the Buddha idealized, on the other hand it is the *dharmakāya* personified. Śākyamuni is his mouthpiece or shadow. The *saṁbhogakāya* is incarnated in the *nirmāṇakāya*. When our eyes are open to the glory of the eternal Buddha we need not look at his human expression. In the days of Ignorance the teachings and examples of the human Buddha are helpful but when we see clearly with the eyes of the bodhisattva, "not through a glass darkly", we look to the refulgent Buddha, the Buddha of sight, of truth, of eternality.[105]

B.L. Suzuki compares the idea of *trikāya* to the philosophy of trinity in Christianity. The *dharmakāya* thus corresponds to Godhead in Christianity, the source of all, realized only through mystical experiences. This being becomes God as usually known to all as *saṁbhogakāya*. But ordinary people need something more tangible and require a living personality—hence *nirmaṇakāya*. In other words, the three *kāyas* stand for the Godhead, God and Christ. Or, she says, we might compare the

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dharmakāya to *parabrahma*, *sambhogakāya* to Īṣvara and *nirmāṇakāya* to the avātaras.[106]

From 200 B.C., down to the Christian era the great Buddhist stūpas were enriched with beautiful sculptures. In these works no image of the Buddha appears. But in many of the scenes represented, his presence is indicated by some symbol and all the carved work breathed the spirit of devotion and reverence. Then in the 1st century A.D., we see images of the Buddha for the first time and Buddhism introducing a personal element in worship. We see the Buddha converted into a superhuman and eternally living principle. This culmination in the creation of a new Buddhism or Mahāyāna gave a new impetus to worship in Buddhism and brought it nearer the other theistic sects. The Mahāyāna doctrine, following upon earlier tendencies, has brought about a new concept of the Buddha. He was seen as the absolute world-principle, a personification of the highest truth, wisdom and goodness. In connection with this outlook there developed a desire to behold and revere his sacred person and to show pious devotion to him as the merciful redeemer.

This step was taken in two regions—Gāndhāra and Mathurā. Scholars have debated for many years which came first. But now most of them have come to the conclusion that Mathurā was ahead by a few decades and the issue has lost much of its significance in view of the small difference in time involved. Of greater importance than the chronological sequence is the great upsurge of the element of bhakti which permeated such distantly situated regions.

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2. "*Iti pi so bhagavā Arhaṁ Sammā—Sambuddho Vijjā-caraṇa-sampanno sugato Lokavidh Anuttaro Purisa-dhamma-sārathi Satthā-deva-manussānaṁ Buddho Bhagavā, 'ti*" *Samyutta Nikāya*, vol. II, p. 59, p, 311.
3. In Buddhism, there is always an emphasis on practical experience. It is said to be necessary even for laymen, see *Anguttara*, I (P.T.S.), pp. 171-172. In the 'Cullahatthi-padopamasutta' of the *Majjhima Nikaya* I (P.T.S.), p. 230. Buddha has compared a spiritual seeker with a clever elephant-tracker who for himself walks on the way and comes to know the truth.
4. *Milindapanho*, pp. 98ff.
5. Contra ibid., p. 178, where right thinking is declared to be the true relic worship for the Buddhist monks.
6. '*Pūtikāya*'—See story of Vakkali, *Samyutta Nikāya* (Nal. ed.). vol. II, p. 341.
7. Pande, G.C. *Bauddha Dharma ke Vikās kā Itihāsa*, p. 284.
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10. *Aṅguttara* (P.T.S.), vol. II, p. 38.
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12. Cf. Dutt, N. *Early Monastic Buddhism*, II, pp. 62-63.
13. "*Lokottarā bhagavato caryā*", *Mahāvastu*, vol. I, p. 198.
14. "*na ca maithunasambhūtaṁ sugatasya samucchritaṁ*", ibid., p. 201.
15. ibid., p. 197.
16. See, Binayendra Chowdhary, 'Date of Buddha worship,' *The Mahobodhi*, vol. 75, No. 7, pp. 243-44.
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30. For a detailed discussion on the concepts of *Parjñā* and *Karuṇā*, *Infra*, pp. 168-72.
31. *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka*, pp. 289-290.
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Tadahaṁ bhaktyupahṛtamaśnāmi prayatātmanaḥ", *Gītā*, IX, 26.
34. *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka*, Ch. X, pp. 153-54.
35. See, Misra, G.S.P. *The Age of Vinaya*, pp. 95-96.
36. Bhiksu Sangharaksita, who believes that "some of the formulae used are as old as Buddhism itself", says about the use of this term : "The use of the term *anutatra*, unsurpassed or supreme, for the Mahāyāna office, was perhaps intended to suggest a comparison with its more rudimentary Hīnayāna original". See Bhiksu Sangharaksita, *Survey of Buddhism*, p. 446.
37. *Bodhicaryāvatāra* II, 8.
38. ibid.
39. See Chapter VI.
40. *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, II, 28-32.
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42. *Dīgha Nīkāya*, I, 85, *Samyutta*, IV, 317, *Majjhima*, i, 440.
43. *Śiṣkṣa-Samuccaya*, 58, 15; *Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra*, *Panjikā* 153, 11, 16ff.
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52. *Lalita Vistāra*, p. 298.
53. *Saundarānanda*, XII. 30-33, 41.
54. *Siddhi*, vol. I, pp. 320-22.
55. *Sthiramati*, Quoted, ibid., p. 323.
56. *Saundarānanda*, XVIII, 4.
57. ibid., V. 24.
58. ibid., XII, 37.
59. *Mahāvastu*, iii, 309, 9.
60. *Śikṣāsamuccya*, 62, 8.
61. ibid., 2, 14.
62. ibid., 3, 6, 3, 13, etc.
63. Hardayal, *The Buddhist Doctrine*, p. 32.
64. Edward Conze, *Thirty years of Buddhist Studies*, Ch. 'Buddhist Saviours', p. 40.
65. "*Paritrāṇāya sādhūnāṁ vināśāya ca duṣkṛtaṁ,*
Dharmasaṁsthāpanārthāya saṁbhavāmi yuge yuge", *Gītā*, IV, 8.
66. S. Levi 153-5, 169-70, 176.
67. Also *Apadāna* 336, for miraculous results of one single act of devotion.
68. *Supra*, p. 155.
69. *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka*, p. 229.
70. *Mahāyānasūtra-Saṅgraha*, vol. I, p. 257.
71. Horner, I.B. "Compassion", *Stepping Stones*, vol, II. p. 16.
72. *Mahāvyutpatti*, Sec. 12.
73. *Karuṇā Puṇḍarīka*, 122.10, 119; *Prajñā Pāramitā Śat*. 111.
74. *Lalita Vistāra*, 376. 5, 402; *Saddharma Puṇḍrīka* 238.4.
75. *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*, XX, 371-73.
76. Hardayal, *The Buddhisi Doctrine*, p. 44.
77. *Mahāvyutpatti*, i, 38. 14ff; *Lalita-Vistāra*, 5.2; 403.1; *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka*, 81. 3.
78. See Hardayal, op. cit., pp. 45-46.
79. The advantages and disadvantages of both have been discussed in detail by C. Humphreys in *Young East*.
80. See E. Conze, *Thirty Years of Buddhist Studies*, Ch. "Buddhist Saviours", p. 45.
81. Cf. *Abhidharmakośa* 7.33. *Karuṇa* is *Adveṣa-svabhāva* while *Mahā* is *Amoha-svabhāva*.
82. Pande, G. C. *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism*. Ch. 'Nirvāṇa', pp. 464; *Buddha Dharma ke Vikās ka Itihāsa*, pp. 347-48.
83. ibid., p. 446.
84. Cf. Dutt, N. *Aspects of Mahāyāna Buddhism* pp. 176-178.
85. *Abhidharma-Kośa*. 4.56. They blieved in the existence of two kinds of element (*skandhas*). Besides those subject to total extinction of the time of nirvāṇa

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there is a subtle consciousness which survives after nirvāṇa and of which the former are manifestations. Here we have the germ of *Ālaya-vijñāna* or the *Yogācāra* system though they (Sautr.) differed from Mahāyāna as they admitted the reality of the phenomenal world.

86. See Dutt, op. cit., pp. 175-78.
87. ibid., p. 102.
88. *Mādhyamakaśāstra*, Ch. XXII.
89. *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, 39: "*samyaksambuddhopi māyopamaḥ syapanopama iti*".
90. *Mādhyamaka Śāstra*, XXII, 2-10.
91. ibid., XXII, 12.
92. ibid., XXII, 16.
93. ibid.
94. Poussin, *Vijñaptimātratasiddhi*, vol. II, p. 693.
95. Nalinaksha Dutt, *Aspects of Mahāyāna Buddhism*, p. 165.
96. Suzuki (tr.), *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra*, pp. 51-52.
97. N. Dutt, op. cit. p. 121.
98. *siddhi*, vol. II, p. 790.
99. N. Dutt, op. cit., p. 122.
100. Suzuki, D. T. *Studies in the Laṇkāvatāra*, p. 308.
101. *Siddhi*, vol. II, pp. 696 ff; Pande, G. C. *Bauddha Dharma ka vikās ka Itihasa*, p. 354.
102. Suzuki, D. T. *The Essence of Buddhism*, p. 19.
103. Suzuki, B. L. *Mahāyāna Buddhism—A Brief Outline*, pp. 46-47.
104. See Gopinath Kaviraj, *Aspects of Indian Philosophy*, Ch. 1.
105. See Suzuki. op. B. L. cit., p. 42, quoting *The Awakening of Faith*, pp. 101-102, which states : The *sambhogakāya* manifests everywhere in infinite, boundless, limitless, unintermittent in action and embraces indefinite attributes of bliss and merit.
106. Suzuki, B. L. op. cit., pp. 47-49.
See also Susmita Pande, "Conceptual background of the development of bhakti in Mahāyāna Buddhism", *Buddhist Studies*, University of Delhi, 1980.

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6

Contribution of the Pancaratra Literature

Pāñcarātra literature, its date and contents

ACCORDING to the *Īśvarasaṁhitā* the literature of the *Pāñcarātra* includes the works of inspired or divine origin (*divya*) as also of human authorship (*munibhāsīta*)[1]. The latter class includes *vidhi* and *prayoga*-digests, commentaries, etc. and the former—*Saṁhitās* (the word tantra is also used). Tradition gives the number of *Saṁhitās* as hundred and eight, but from an inspection of the lists as given in the *saṁhitās* it does not appear that there ever was any authoritative or standardized list of just hundred and eight. On the basis of the lists found in *Kapiñjala*, *Padma*, *Viṣṇu* and *Hayaśīrṣa Saṁhitās* and *Agni Purāṇa*, Schrader has compiled as many as 215 names and has further classified the *Saṁhitā* literature into three classes—(a) the original *Saṁhitās*, (b) the much smaller south Indian class, (c) the still smaller class of North and South Indian apocryphal or spurious *Saṁhitās*.[2] But while some important *Saṁhitās* have been published many remain unpublished.[3]

But to determine which of the *Saṁhitās* are the original and the oldest is very very difficult. Many scholars regard *Pauṣkara*, *Sāttvata*, *Jayākhya* and *Parama Saṁhitās* as the oldest. In some manuscripts of the *Jayākhya Samhitā*, *Sāttvata*, *Pauṣkara* and *Jayākhya* have been called the three jewels (ratnatraya)[4]—*Īśvara Pārameśvara* and *Pādma Saṁhitās* are supposed to derive respectively from the 'three jewels'.[5] Schrader has opined on the basis of *spandapradīpikā* of *Utpalavaiṣṇava* of Kāśmīra (10th century A.D.) who refers to a number of *Pañcarātra Saṁhitās*,[6] that the *terminus ad quem* of the original *Pañca* must have been 8th century A.D. However, the fact that the *Brahmasūtras*[7] already refer to the *Pāñcarātra* doctrines may be taken to indicate an age for them anterior to the 5th century in which Jacobi places the *Brahmasūtras*. It also stands to reason that the basic *Pāñcarātra* texts should be older than the age of the Āḷvārs (7th and 8th century A.D.) who take its general principles for granted. Perhaps like the older *purāṇas* the earlier *Pāñcarātra Saṁhitās* should also have been finalized in the Gupta Age. In this connection B. Bhattacharya's dating of the *Jayākhya* to the

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5th century on the basis of palaeographic assessment of the forms of letters described in it appears decisive.[8] *Sāttvata* and *Pauṣkara* would belong to the same age.

The *saṁhitās* have four main topics—*jñāna*, *yoga*, *kriyā* and *caryā*, or knowledge, concentration, action and conduct. *Jñāna* concerns itself with the spiritual mysteries of Brahman. *Jīva* and the universe; yoga with the concentration which aids in *mukti*, *kriyā* is connected with the construction and consecration of temples and images, and *caryā* with the religious and social observances, daily rites, festivals, etc. Mostly the description of *caryā* is found in the *Saṁhitās* after that of *kriyā*, then, *jñāna* and very little of *yoga*. The *Pāñcarātra* are mostly concerned with the practical propounding of the *kriyā* and *caryā*. Other factors receive less attention. But the element of devotion can be traced in all the four sections. Their very philosophy is rooted deep in devotion, though it is more of *vaidhī* than of the *rāgātmikā* type. It is a doctrine of faith and works, rather than of Faith alone.

Meaning of the term Pāñcarātra

The various texts give various explanations for its rather peculiar name. According to the *Mahābhārata* (Śāntiparva) this system was comprised of the four vedas and the *sānkhya yoga*, hence it was named *Pāñcarātra*.[9]

According to the *Nārada Pāñcarātra*[10] the system is named after the number of topics in it. *Rātra* means knowledge—*rātram ca jñānavacanam jñānam pañcavidhaṁ smṛtaṁ*.[11] *Paramatattva*, *mukti*, *bhakti*, *yoga* and *viṣaya*, i.e. ontology (cosmology), liberation, devotion, yoga and the objects of sense—these five topics are propounded by the *Pāñcarātras*. Hence its name *Pāñcarātrās*.[12] Even in the *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā* the view of *Nārada Pāñcarātra* is supported.[13]

Īśvara Saṁhitā gives a somewhat different explanation. It says that the name *Pāñcarātra* is connected with the first sermon of this system. The *amśa* forms of the Lord's five *āyudhas*, Śaṇḍilya, Aupagāyana, Mauñjyāyana, Kauśika and Bhāradvāja, performed penance on top of Taṭādri mauntain seeking Viṣṇu's favours. The Lord Vāsudeva being pleased with them, explained to them the mystery of "Ekāyana Veda". This sermon was given not in one night but in five nights. Hence the name *Pāñcarātra*.[14]

According to the *Padma Tantra* the name *Pāñcarātra* was kept on the basis of its greatness. The tantra with which the other five systems in comparison become obscure like the night is called *Pāñcarātra*.[15]

Viṣṇu Saṁhitā says that the *pañcamahābhūtas* or the five sensuous objects (viṣayas) are called *Pāñcarātras*. The system by the study of which these five *rātris* disappear, is called *Pāñcarātra*.[16]

The explanation of *Paramasaṁhitā* is also somewhat like this. According to it *pañcamahābhūtas*, *tanmātra*, *ahaṅkāra*, *buddhi* and *avyakta* (*prakṛti*) are the

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rātras or *dāṇas* of the *puruṣa*. The system is named *Pāñcarātra* as it is based on them. In the *Parama Saṁhitā* those principles are described in a unique way.[17]

According to Schrader[18] the name *Pāñcarātra* should be traced back to the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* which says that Puruṣa Nārāyaṇa conceived of the idea of a *Pāñcarātra sattra* (continued sacrifice for five days) for obtaining supremacy over all beings and becoming all beings.[19] In another chapter it is stated how He, by sacrificing himself became the whole world.[20] It has been suggested that the sect took its name from the central dogma which was the *Pāñcarātra sattra* of Nārāyaṇa interpreted philosophically as the fivefold self manifestation of God by means of his *para*, *vyūha*, *vibhava*, *antaryāmī* and *arcā* forms. This would well agree with the statement in *Ahirbudhnya Samhitā* at the end of the eleventh *adhyāya*[21] that the Lord himself selected out of the original *śāstra* "the system (tantral) called *Pāñcarātra* describing His (fivefold) nature (known) as *para*, *vyūha*, *vibhava*, etc. and that the highest will of Viṣṇu called Sudarśana through which he split into five, appearing five-mouthed".

A passage in the *Agni Purāṇa*[22] states that the five elements (*pañcabhūtāḥ*) forming the body of Brahmā are known as *pāñcarātra*. On the basis of the above passage T. P. Bhattacharya and Hazra have contended that the term '*rātra*' originally stood for 'element' and the term *pāñcarātra* was used for those who regarded the creation as consisting of five elements.

Perhaps the real meaning of *Pāñcarātra* was 'those who worship at the five timings'. In the *Mahābhārata*, the Bhāgavatas are defined as knowing the essence of the twelve-syllabled mantra, versed in the divisions of the four *vyūhas* and *knowing the uninterrupted five times* (*acchidra pañcakālajñāh*)".[23] In the *Padma Saṁhita*[24] the five practices (vidhis) —*abhigamana*, *upādāna*, *ijyā*, *svādhyāya* and *yoga*—are connected with five times and in the *Jayākhya*[25] they serve to name the five divisions into which day and night are divided. Perhaps the original 'five nights' as Nārāyaṇa's sacrifice are thus recapitulated in the worshippers' division as his day and this insistence on the five *kālas* came to characterize the *Pāñcarātrakas*.

Origin and development of Pāñcarātra

The origin and development of *Pāñcarātra* is shrouded in mystery. The *Īśvara Saṁhitā* says that the *Pāñcarātra* system is connected with the vedas especially with its *ekāyana* branch.[26] In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, *Ekāyana Vidyā* is mentioned but the subjects with which it was concerned are not given.[27] Hence we cannot say with certainty that the upaniṣad refers to this very sect. Baldev Upadhyaya[28] reminds us that in the upaniṣad *ekāyana vidyā* is connected with Nārada and later in the *Mahābharata* Nārada is considered as the worshipper and propounder of this *Pāñcarātra* doctrine. In the *Iśvara Samhitā* the word *ekāyana* means that this is the only *ayana* or way for acquiring mokṣa.[29] If this is the meaning of *ekāyana vidyā* in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣād* also then we ought to consider this doctrine as ancient as this

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Upaniṣad.[30] We must also keep in mind the fact that it is the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* which also speeks of the sage Kṛṣṇa—Devakīputra who was the disciple of the sage Ghora of Āṅgirasa family[31] and there is a great similarity between the doctrine of Ghora Āṅgirasa and *Gītā*. In the latter, the basic doctrine of Ghora Āṅgirasa seem to be elaborated.[32] Hence though the germs of the basic tenets of Bhagavatism may be traced to the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* it is doubtful if the *Pāñcarātra* doctrine had its origin as early as the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*.

As mentioned above the first clear reference to *Pāñcarātra* is found in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* quoted above. Here *Pāñcarātra* is connected with Nārāyṇa who is said to have performed a *Pāñcarātra sattra*. The question that arises now is—when was Nārāyaṇa identified with Viṣṇu and Vāsudeva, so that it formed an important doctrine in Vaiṣṇavism. The earliest evidence in favour of the identification of Nārāyaṇa with Viṣṇu can be traced in the *Baudhāyana Dharma Sūtra* about the 5th century B.C., according to scholars like D.C. Sircar.[33] Nearly about the same time Pāṇini (6th century B.C., or 5th century B.C.)[34] also offers the rule for the formation of the word 'Vāsudevaka' in the sense of 'a person whose object of bhakti is Vāsudeva'. It is generally agreed that bhakti here is taken probably in the sense of religious adoration.[35] We know for certain that Vāsudeva was the object of devotion as early as the 4th century B.C., as Megasthenes refers to Heracles, i.e. Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa who was revered by the people of Sourasenoi, i.e. Mathura. By the time of the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, Narāyaṇa, Vāsudeva and Viṣṇu were identified with one another—*nārāyaṇāya vidmahe vāsudevāya dhīmahi—Tanno Viṣṇuḥ pracodayāt*.[36]

The identification of Vāsudeva, Viṣṇu and Nārāyaṇa is found in the *Mahābhārata*. In the Nārayaṇīya section of the śāntiparva *Pāñcarātra* is also mentioned. It is said that it was formed out of the four vedas and *Sānkhya Yoga*. Nārada goes to Śvetadvīpa where he sees people who worshipped Nārāyaṇa and created the *Tantra-śāstra* engrossed in *ekāntika* devotion and *mānasajapa*. Then the story of Vasu-Uparicara is given. This shows the glory of *ahimsā* and devotion.[37] Such a delineation clearly contradicts the derivation of *Pāñcarātra* from any human sacrifice.

Raychowdhari[38] compares Nārāyaṇa in the Śvetadvīpa with the Ṛgvedic Viṣṇu in his highest station as observed by the *sūris*. He emphasizes Nārāyaṇa's solar association. D.C. Sircar[39] also thinks that Nārāyaṇa was an ancient leader of thought, born in the family of Nara and that both of them probably advocated solar worship which ultimately led to the identification especially of Nārāyaṇa with the solar deity Viṣṇu.[40] L.B. Keny takes a different view.[41] Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa was identified with Viṣṇu because his doctrine was also an elaboration of the ancient solar doctrine. Kṛṣṇa himself acknowledges this fact in the *Gītā*.[42] It has been suggested that the followers of Nārāyaṇa were originally called *Pāñcarāttrika* and were later merged into the worshippers of Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa or that the Sāttavatas originally worshipped Nārāyaṇa.[43]

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Scholars hold different views regarding the date of the Nārāyaṇīya section. According to Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya[44] it was composed in the Kuṣāna period. But others like S.K. Aiyangar,[45] and Bhandarkar[46] assign it to pre-Buddhist era.

According to some scholars like V.S. Pathak[47], when the identification of Viṣṇu. Vāsudeva and Nārāyaṇa was complete theree schools of devotion appertaining to Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa and Vāsudeva merged together to form the great Vaiṣṇva movement. This can be inferred from the fact that even after their assimilation the old associations of the divinities could not be effaced. He thinks that *Pāñcarātra* sect was originally connected only with Narāyaṇa, who was worshipped along with Nṛsimha, Varāha and Kapila. The *Jayākhya Samhita* which is one of the oldest of the *Pāñcarātra* texts is pre-eminently devoted to the worship of Nārāyana with Nṛsimha, Varāha and Kapila.[48] Viṣnu was worshipped according to the *Vaikhānasa āgama*, with Puruṣa, Satya, Achyuta and Aniruddha, while Vāsudeva was worshipped along with the three members of the *vyūha*. The *Viṣṇu Samhitā* shows that the Vaiṣnava Siddhānta was divided into five branches—Vaikhānasa, Sāttvata, Ekāntin, Śikhī and Mūla, i.e. *Pāñcarātra*.[49] Ekāntika and Śikhī were branches of sāttvata doctrine. Those who worshipped only Vāsudeva were Ekāntins: those who worshipped other members of the *vyūhas* also were Śikhīs. The *mūla*, i.e. *Pañcarāttrika*s worṣhipped Nārāyaṇa with his three associates. The *Pañcarātra rakṣā* of Vedāntadeśika distinguishes *Pāñcarātra* into *mantra*, *āgama*, *tantra* and *tantrāntara* branches and it has been suggested that *tantrāntara* was the original *Pañcarātra*. Hence it seems that some distinction was preserved even as late as these *saṁhitās* between the different sects even though they were amalgamated much earlier. We can say that the *Pañcarātra* had become a generic term for all the Vaiṣnava sects when Vāsudeva, Viṣṇu and Nārāyaṇa were identified, though originally it could have been associated with Nārāyaṇa only. Later on it was very difficult to point out the distinction between the various sects if there were any. Vāsudeva with his *vyūhas* became a prominent deity of the *Pāñcarāttrikas*. The associates of Nārāyaṇa—Nṛsimha, Varāha, and Kapila—must have been amalgamated in the *vibhava* form of the Lord.

Vyuha Theory—Origin

Let us examine the emergence of the *vyūha* theory which formed the principle tenet of the *Pāñcarātra* system. The doctrine undoubtedly arose out of the deification of the several Vṛṣṇi heroes (*vīras*) besides Vāsudeva. We shall examine its philosophy in detail later. Here let us try to surmise the cause of its origin only. We know that Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa was declared as the supreme divinity in the *Gītā*. In the Vibhūtiyoga Chapter Kṛṣṇa says—"*vṛṣṇīnāṁ vāsudevo asmi*"—and also identifies himself with Viṣṇu—"*ādityānām ahaṁ viṣṇuḥ*",[50] thus implying that he, Vāsudeva is Viṣṇu incarnate and supreme amidst the Vṛṣṇis. Now we know that there was a tradition of hero worship for important rulers from very ancient times. Its traces are also found in the upaniṣadic and the epic traditions and the

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apotheosis of the other Vṛṣṇi *vīras* must have been prevalent following this tradition.[51] When Kṛṣṇa was declared as an incarnation the followers of the other Vṛṣṇi heroes perhaps evolved the doctrine of *vyūha* according to which they were regarded as emanations of the Lord and as phases of the manifestation of the spirit. The *vyūha* doctrine was an effort to integrate the doctrines of incarnation and hero worship. The Vṛṣṇi heroes were Saṁkarṣaṇa, Vāsudava, Pradyumna, Sāmba and Aniruddha as shown by an inscription (Morā, seven miles west of Mathura) of the first century A.D., which mentions 'the images of the group of five divine heroes of the Vṛṣṇi family'.[52] Jitendranath Bannerjea has shown on the authority of the *Vāyu Purāṇa* that the five Vṛṣṇi *vīras* were Vāsudeva, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Sāmba and Aniruddha.[53] Earlier as Alsdorf had named the five Vṛṣṇi heroes as Baladeva, Akrūra, Banādṛṣṭi, Śaraṇa and Vidūratha on the basis of Jain *Harivamśa* and *Triṣaṣṭiśalākā Puruṣcarita*. But J.N. Banerjea has convincingly proved his point. Inscriptions of the period prior to first century A.D. indicate the worship of Vṛṣṇi heroes. The Ghosundi Inscription[54] (of Chittorgarh district, Rajasthan) of the first century B.C. records the construction of a *pūjā-śilā-prakāra* (stone enclosure for a place of worship) styled *nārāyaṇa vāṭakā* by a Bhāgavata who had performed the Aśvamedha sacrifice in honour of Saṁkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva. They are both called Bhagavat as well as Sarveśvara (supreme Lord) and *anihata* (unconquered). The Nānāghat inscription of about the same age belonging to a Satavāhana Queen begins with the adoration of the gods Dharma, Indra, Saṁkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva along with other gods. Even before this time the Besanagar inscription (Vidiśā district, M.P.) of the last quarter of the second century B.C., refers to the setting up of a *garuḍadhvaja* (column surmounted by Garuḍa) at Vidiśā in honour of Vāsudeva, the *devadeva*, by his Yavana devotee Heliodorus of Taxila who called himself a worshipper of Bhagavat (Vāsudeva Viṣṇu).[55]

J.N. Banerjea thinks that fragmentary capitals with the figures of Garuḍa, Tāla (Fan palm) and Makara (crocodile) found at Besanagar and Pawaya point to the existence of the *dhvajas* and shrines of deities Vāsudeva, Saṁkarṣaṇa and Pradyumna.[56] An early sculpture of Balarāma also comes from Mathura which has been assigned to the second century B.C., on stylistic grounds. The non-mention of Pradyumna and Aniruddha in the Ghosundi and Nānāghat inscriptions leads D.C. Sircar to suggest that they were probably not as great religious teachers as were Vāsudeva ane Saṁkarṣaṇa and their worship must have been limited to the Vṛṣṇi circle only in the Mathura region.[57]

J.N. Banerjea in an interesting article shows the position of Sāmba among the early *Pāñcarātrins*.[58] He says that though he was the object of great veneration in the early period yet his position faded into such insignificance that he had no place in the order of the *vyūhas*. Banerjea is inclined to identify some of the sculptured figures from Mathura as those of Sāmba. They are modelled like those of Sūrya but carry a staff and mace in hands. It has been suggested that the mace

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in his hand fully tallies with his iconographic description in *Bṛhat Samhitā*.[59] His images are modelled on the basis of Sūrya as he is supposed to be a great champion of solar worship.[60] Other images of Sāmba show him holding a drinking cup and staff. According to Banerjea, the drinking cup in his hand is in accordance with his love for wine in the *Mahābharata*.

Thus the worship of the Vṛṣṇi heroes was quite popular in the early centuries of the Christian era. But by the dawn of Gupta age only an intense bhakti of the Vāsudeva, incarnation of Nārāyaṇa and Viṣṇu, was seen mostly. The worship of the other Vṛṣṇi heroes, in the form of *vyūhas* yielded place to the various avatāras of Viṣṇu—as the avtāra aspect appealed more to the hearts of the people. The emanatory theory of the *vyūhas*, which for its philosophical basis apparently relies on sānkhyan principles, could not appeal to people for long. By the time of Harṣa we already see the *Harṣacarita* making a distinction between the Bhāgavatas and the *Pāñcarātrikas*.

Philosophy of the Pāñcarātra

The form of the Lord visualized by the *Pāñcarātra* philosophy is in keeping with the idea of bhakti. They conceive the Lord as having supernatural qualities.[61] He is the cause of all causes and has six qualities—

> "*Sarvadvanda-vinirmuktaṁ sarvopādhi-vivarjitaṁ*
> *ṣāḍguṇyaṁ tat param brahma sarvakāraṇa-kāraṇaṁ*".[62]

The six *guṇas* are—*jñāna* (knowledge), *aiśvarya* (lordship), *śakti* (potency), *bala* (strength), *vīrya* (virility), *tejas* (splendour). Knowledge is defined as non-inert, self-consciousness, eternal, all penetrating, i.e. omniscience.[63] It is both the essence and an attribute of Brahman.[64] Lordship is "activity based on independence, unimpeded activity (*kartṛtvaṁ svātantrya-paribṛṁhitaṁ*). Potency or śakti is the ability to become the material cause of the world (*jagatprakṛtibhāvaḥ*); it is being able to produce something, the cause of which cannot be accounted for by the empirical methods. *Bala* or strength is defined as fatiguelessness (*śramahāniḥ*) and is connection the creation of the world. *Vīrya* or virility means unaffectedness or changelessness in spite of being the material cause (*upādānabhāvepi vikāraviraho hi yaḥ*). *Tejas* or splendour is self-sufficiency or independence of any auxiliaries (*sahakāryanapekṣā*).

In their totality the guṇas make up the body of Vāsudeva,[65] the highest personal God as well as his consort Lakṣmī. Qualified by the six guṇas the god is called Vāsudeva.

The Lord's śakti—the active aspect of the Lord—is Mahālakṣmī. She is knowledge, bliss and activity. She is inseparable from God and yet not absolutely identical with Him. They are like the attribute and its bearer, existence and that which exists, I-ness and I, etc.[66] In fact the six guṇas described above are embodied by śakti thus forming the so called body of Nārāyaṇa. Śakti embodying these

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guṇas actually replaces God by performing all His divine functions, yet being inseparable from Him, never supersedes Him. This is a unity in duality, or two in one, the *advaya tattva*.[67] She possesses the *kriyā śakti* and the *bhūtī śakti*.[68] The *kriyā śakti* is "Viṣṇu's resolve consisting of life", i.e. his will. The *bhūtī śakti* is the conversion of this resolve into creation.[69]

Different manifestations of the Lord

The purpose of the Lord's manifestations is to facilitate the release of living beings from the shackles of life, death and misery by providing them with objects to worship and meditate upon. There are five-fold manifestations of the Lord—*para*, *vyūha*, *vibhava*, *antaryāmi* and *arca* forms.

The *para* is the highest form of the Lord in the highest heaven. Then there are *vyūhas*.[70] This word has been explained as a combination of the root *ūha* 'to shove' and the preposition *vi* meaning 'as under', thus showing as under of the six *guṇas* into pairs.[71] The six guṇas in their totality make up the body of Vāsudeva, the highest personal God and his consort Lakṣmī. The guṇas, *jñāna* and *bala*, combine and Saṁkarṣaṇ becomes manifest, *aisvarya* and *vīrya* combine and Pradyumna becomes manifest, and śakti and *tejas* combine and Aniruddha becomes manifest.[72] This does not mean that each *vyūha* has only two guṇas, but that each *vyūha* is Viṣṇu himself with his six guṇas of which only two in each case become manifest.[73] The Nārāyaṇiya section of the *Mahābhārata* and Śankara's commentary on *Vedanta sūtras* also make these the representatives of individual soul, mind and *ahaṁkāra*[74] but this view was not much popular in the later *Samhitās* except the *Lakṣmī tantra*.[75] Schrader tries to argue that these *vyūhas* must have been tutelary deities of the said principles. This, however, misses the fundamental philosophy of the *Pāñcarātra* which links *śakti* and *śaktimān* as an indivisible unity.[76] The *vyūhas* may be understood on the analogy of the early Christian doctrine of the Trinity. The four *vyūhas* are four 'persons' or hypostasis with the same divine nature.[77] They mutually reflect each other spontaneously and are indistinguishable as the sky and the crystal or the interpenetration of radiations.[78]

We had seen in the chapter on *Gītā* and the epics that a very important function of the *avatāra* is to act as a spiritual guide. We see here that the *vyūhas* also perform this function and hence they also become the source of devotion. In the *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*,[79] *Viśvakasena Saṁhitā*, and *Lakṣmī Tantra*[80] it is said that Samkarṣaṇa teaches śāstra or theory, i.e. monotheism (*ekāntika mārga*), Pradyumna of its translation into practice (*tat kriyā*) and Aniruddha the gain resulting from such practice (*kriyā-phala*), to wit, liberation. Their cosmic activities are the creation, preservation and destruction of the world.[81] According to *Lakṣmī tantra*[82] the function of Aniruddha is creating, of Pradyumna preserving and Samkarṣaṇa destroying while according to *Viśvaksena Saṁhitā*...Pradyuma creates, Aniruddha preserves and Saṁkarṣaṇa destroys.[83]

In His *vibhava* form the Lord manifests Himself in the form of avatāras which are enumerated in the texts as thirty-nine.[84] The same list occurs also in the

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Sāttvata Samhitā in the ninth *pariccheda*. Besides, in the *Ahirbudhnya Samhitā* two categories of avatāras are given—primary and secondary—the former woshipped to attain liberation while the latter for mundane purposes. These avatāras are eternal aspects of Viṣṇu which are always helpful if properly meditated upon. It has been said that 'it is indeed for meditation, more than any thing else, that Viṣṇu is believed to have manifested Himself under different forms".[85] Even in the *Gītā* the function of the Lord seems to help human beings to become perfected in their nature, to help people to become what they potentially are, the ascent of man to Godhood. Meditation on these avatāras with devotion is utilizing God's grace in achieving this goal.

Arcā—The Lord even condescends to live in the images of him made by human beings to help them in the above goal. This is His *arcā* manifestation. The images are not symbols for God but God Himself resides in them. The ceremony *prāṇa pratiṣṭhā* is the invoking of the Lord in the image. Even in the ancient vedic ritual the gods were invoked to be actually present at the sacrifice. This belief in the actual presence of the deity in the symbol is, indeed, an ancient and persistent tradition in India.

As *Antaryāmi* He resides for ever in the hearts of the people. This view is as old as the upaniṣads. The *antaryāmi Puruṣa* is described in the *Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*.[86]

Five-fold functions of the Lord and the Doctrine of Grace

The five-fold functions of the Lord are *sṛṣṭi*, *sthiti*, *vināśa*, *nigraha* and *anugraha*.[87] This doctrine is equally found among the Śaivas who describe Mahadeva as *Pañca kṛtyakārin*.

According to the *Pañcarātra Saṁhitās*, *sṛṣṭi* or creation is of three types—pure (*śuddha*), mixed (*miśra*) and impure (*aśuddha*). The first is purely a transcendental creation and consists of all the emanations and incarnations already described in the various manifestations of the Lord. This is creation beyond the realm of nature or matter. They consist of pure and supernatural *sattva*, constituted wholly out of Light or pure intelligence, a world of frozen illumination located in pure space or ". . . . *prabhojjvalā jñānānandamayī styānā deśabhāvaṁ vrajatyuta*".[88] It is a world of infinite knowledge and bliss.

The mixed type of creation starts from the collective *jīva* stage. Kūṭastha Puruṣa as an aggregate of souls covered with beginningless *vāsanā* and *māyā śakti*—both arise from Pradyumna and serve as the matrix of further creation.[89] Out of Kūṭastha arise four couples or Manus while from māyā proceed *guṇa*, *kāla* and *niyati*. *Niyati* being the inner destiny governing Time. These three have been rightly compared with the five *kañcukas* of the Śaivas intended to serve as limiting factors in the descent of the soul to the world of matter. Out of māyā arises the *avyakta* or *mūla prakṛti* which is the material source of Impure creation.

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Besides dividing creation into three types the *Pāñcarā ra* also divides it into six stages called *kośas* or sheaths. The term implies that in each stage śakti projects herself into various manifestations while yet remaining the transcendental inner principle. These stages are *śakti kośa, māyā kośa, prasūti kośa, prakṛti kośa, brahmāṇḍa kośa,* and *jīva kośa.* From the time of the vedas, God is regarded as transcendent as well as immanent in the world. The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* says—"*sa bhūmiṁ viśvato vṛtvāatyatiṣṭhaddaśāṅgulaṁ*".[90] This immanence and transcendence is seen in the *Gītā* also.[90] *Pañcarātra* has developed a whole philosophy of sheaths to show that śakti projects herself into manifestations and yet remains transcendent. The transcendent aspect of the Lord brings immense reverence and hence devotion for Him.

The other function is *sthiti* or preservation of the world and the third is the *vināśa* or the destruction of the world. *Nigraha* is the function by which the Lord or his śakti create delusion among men. This is also known as māyā or *avidyā.* It obscures the form, *aiśvarya* or splendour and knowledge originally present in the jīva (originally he has these qualities in unlimited form).[91] The jīva becomes atomic, little knowing, little achieving. These three restrictions are called taints or fetters.[92] By these the original divine nature of jīva is obscured. This may be compared with the Śaiva doctrine of *mala* and *kañcuka.* These taints or fetters are cancelled by the *anugraha* of the Lord, i.e. his grace.

The *Ahirbhudhnya Saṁhitā* says that the thieves attack a traveller only so far as he travels as an insignificant common traveller, but as soon as he gets admitted to the retinue of the king the thieves do not attack him. Similar is the case with the devotee. As soon as the divine grace descends on him, the karmans, auspicious or inauspicious, have no sway over him.[93]

As soon as the Lord's grace descends on him he becomes eligible for mokṣa. Renunciation and knowledge enter his heart. He follows the śāstras, his consciousness becomes clear of fetters and he enters Lord's eternal abode.[94] The soul, sentient and bound by beginningless *vāsanā,* is awakened into spiritual life by the Grace of God, i.e. by His willing that the soul be freed of its fetters. Such a resolve of the Lord (*saṅkalpa*) creates an inward turn in the consciousness (*pratyakcetanā*) of the soul as if it were addressed by the invisible power of an incantation (*mantraśaktīrivādṛsya*) covered with the mantle of glory (*tviṣākrāntasvarūpaśca*), the soul turns to union with God as its karman gradually dissolves.[95] The doctrine of Grace already mentioned in the *Kaṭha* and *Śvetāśvatara*[96] Upaniṣads reaches its full bloom here in the context of an all-powerful, sole God who is the source as well as the bourne of the finite soul. Since creation and bondage are real, a real change is needed for mokṣa. This is caused by the free and gracious will of God with which the soul co-operates by engaging in diverse *kriyā, caryā,* and *yoga.* This is a doctrine of faith and works, not faith alone.

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Concept of Mokṣa

Liberation from the fetters (the three limitations) means liberation from worldly bondage. When he attains mokṣa, a person does not take rebirth,[97] but yet his existence is not annihilated. He continues to exist in a transcendental form. The emancipated being is not absolutely extinguished in the existence of the absolute being, but is lifted up to the level of transcendental existence.[98] This existence is identical with that of śakti.[99] Sanjukta Gupta[100] points out that the concept of emancipation basically depends firstly on the concept of śakti and her relation to God in the sense of two-in-one and secondly, on the concept of jīva and jīva's relation to God as being parts of a whole. These concepts have been further elaborated by the later Vaiṣṇavas and more especially by the followers of Caitanya of Bengal in their *acintya bhedābhedavāda*. In the *Gītā* already the jīva is mentioned as the *parā prakṛti* of the lord and it is not difficult to see a continuous evolution from the *Gītā* to the *Pāñcarātra* and thence to scholastic Viśiṣṭādvaita.

The relation of the jīva to the Absolute after emancipation shows that the general trend of the *Pāñcarātra* philosophy was clearly non-*advaitic* as Schrader also points out. He says that though the relation between the jīva and *para* in several *Samhitāṣ* is described in a language thorougly *advaitic*, it only shows a great influence of *advaīta*. Sometimes these passages are echoes of advaitic passages of *Bhagavadgītā* but this borrowing is only a formal one. The *Pādma Tantra*[101] illustrates this where Brahmā asks the difference between Him and the liberated spirit and the Lord says that "They become I, there is no difference whatsoever" but the answer goes on "as I subsist, so do the liberated souls" which brings back the idea of plurality as if the Lord meant to say "They become like me except of course with regard to the governance of the world".[102] With this may be compared the similar idea in Bādarāyaṇa's *Brahmasūtras*. We may, however, contrast the view ascribed by Vācaspati Misra to the *Pāñcarātrikas* which supports Andulomi's opinion on 'emancipation without difference'.[103] This wavering, in fact, arises from a peculiar conception of unity in difference which was later elaborated in Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy. Mokṣa is attained by jñāna. Two types of jñāna are mentioned for attaining Brahman, *kriyākhya* and *sattākhya*, *kriyā-niyama*, and *satta-yama*. *Niyama* and *yama* lead to *advayajñāna* which leads to *sadyaḥ-mukti*—

Evaṁ kriyākhyāt sattākhyaṁ jñānaṁ prāpnoti mānavaḥ
Brahmānyabhinnaṁ sattākhyāt jñānāt jñānaṁ tato bhavet
Brahmābhinnāttato jñānat brahma saṁyujyate param.[104]

Ways to gain liberation and the doctrine of Surrender to the Lord

The *Lakṣmī Tantra* says that there are four ways to attain this—*karman*, *sānkhya*, *yoga* and *śaraṇāgati*.[105] While describing the first it follows the teachings of the *Bhagavadgītā*. In the second it follows the knowledge of categories, system of evolution, nature of God, supreme and essential consciousness. It describes the third as the way of meditation. This is of two kinds—samādhi and *saṁyama*.

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Samādhi is merging into the existence of the absolute being and entails direct realization of Brahman.[106] This is achieved by practising introspective meditation (*yoga*). *Saṁyama* is the second type of *yoga*. It is the *Pāñcarātra's* ritual worship.

But the main contribution in the means of liberation to Vaiṣṇavism by the *Pāñcarātra* is the path of self surrender or *śaraṇāgati*.[107] This is also called "*nyāsā*" by the *Pañcarāttrins*.[108] The *Gītā* also refers to *śaraṇāgati* (*sarvadharmāna-parityajya māmekaṁ śaraṇam vraja* etc.),[109] and the *Pāñcarātra Saṁhitās* have elaborated this point.

The *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā* says that the feeling of *śaraṇāgati* consists of the praying to Lord by the devotee that he is the abode of all sins, that he is without any help and depends only on God for his liberation.[110] It also describes the six forms of *śaraṇāgati*.[111]

(i) *Anukūlasya saṅkalpa*—or the resolution to yield to God, i.e. a resolution to always follow His way and to remain His servant for ever; (ii) *Pratikūlasya varjanaṁ*—or the avoidance of opposition to Him, i.e. remaining always away from those discussions, feelings which are anti-God; (iii) *Rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāsaḥ*—or faith that God will protect; (iv) *Goptṛtva varaṇam*—acceptance of Him as saviour, i.e. the faith that God will protect which should not be only imaginary but one should in reality accept Him as one's saviour; (v) *Ātmanikṣepa*—throwing one's whole soul to Him, surrendering oneself completely to Him; (vi) *Kārpaṇyaṁ*—a sense of utter helplessness—these six constitute *śaraṇāgati*. This leads to throwing oneself completely on Him.

This six-fold *śaraṇāgati* or surrender is declared superior to all other methods.[112] This superiority is due to its capacity of freeing a person not only from the bondage of sin but also from the bondage of *Prārabdhakarman*.[113]

According to Rāmānuja *śaraṇāgti* implies *svarūpa-samarpaṇa*, i.e. an unflinching conviction that one belongs essentially to God, *phala-samarpaṇa*—unflinching dedication of the fruits of ones endeavour to the deity and *bhāra-samarpaṇa*, i.e. the transfer of the responsibility of one in the matter of spiritual progress. According to Rāmāṇuja, *prapatti* is the attainment of the beatific attitude of the God-intoxicated man. The essence of this religion of *prapatti* lies in the fact that the Lord of grace seeks the devotee and finally draws him to himself.[114]

Pañcakarma—The rituals occupy a major portion of the *saṁhitās* and are classified into five main divisions—*abhigamana, upādāna, ijya, adhyāya, yoga*.[115] *Abhigamana* is to proceed Godward by means of *japa*, dhyāna, worship through mind, speech and karmas. *Upādāna* is collecting flower, *arghya* and *naivedya* for the Lord. *Ijyā* is pūjā or worship following the *āgama śāstras*. *Adhyāya* is hearing, contemplating and preaching the Vaiṣṇava texts. Yoga is *aṣṭānga yoga*. All these five karmas should begin in the morning and end by the evening. These *Pañckara-*

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mas are greatly emphasized in the *Purāṇas* through which worship as a personaland domestic ritual was made very popular everywhere.

Pāñcarātras and Vedas

There is a great controversy regarding this question whether it was in accord with the vedas or not.

According to Śankara some portions of *Pāñcarātra* are in accordance with the vedas but not all. He quotes and condemns the *Pāñcarātra* tradition which finds the vedas inadequate.[116] The Lord taking various forms because He wills so, His worship and devotion to him through the *Pañcakarmas*, etc. are not against the vedas. But the portion which goes against them is the "*caturvyūha*" doctrine as also the assertion that Śāṇḍilya found the vedas inadequate. He says that it proves that in the *Pāñcarātra* doctrine jīva is created out of Paramātman. Śankara believes that in the *vyūha* doctrine Vāsudeva is *paramātmā* and Śaṁkarṣaṇa *jīvātmā*. Through Śaṁkarṣaṇa is produced Pradyumna or *manas*, from Pradyumna is created Aniruddha or *ahankara*. But since in the upaniṣads, jīva is eternal, he cannot be created.

But Rāmānuja opines that the *utpatyasambhavādhikaraṇa* of *Brahmasūtra* supports *Pāñcarātra* doctrine and does not contradict it. Even his teacher Yāmunāchārya in *Āgama Prāmāṇya* tries to prove that the *Pāñcarātra* doctrine is not against the Vedic one. Actually their views are based on their interpretation of the Upaniṣads. Whereas for Śankara they depict *advaitic* philosophy, for Rāmānuja it is the Viśiṣṭādvaita.[117] Later Vedāntadeśika also in his text "*Pāñcarātra Rakṣā*" and Bhaṭṭāraka in "*Tantraśuddhi*" regard *Pāñcarātra* to be in accordance with the vedic philosophy after examining the texts of *Mīmāṁsā* system.

According to the Vaiṣṇava ācaryas, *Pañcarātra* is related to the *ekāyana* branch of the Vedas. They quote the *Īśvara Samhitā* for their support which they regard as authentic. We have said before that *Īśvara Saṁhitā* refers to *ekāyana veda* and the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* also mentions *ekāyana vidyā*, though its meaning remains uncertain. They also say that in the *Mahābhārata* it is held that this doctrine is connected with dharma, artha, kāma and mokṣa and that *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* both come under it, that the king Vasu Uparicara learnt it from Bṛhaspati, Vasu Uparicara himself performed a Vedic sacrifice but one in which ahiṁsā was observed. All these āccording to Vaiṣṇava ācaryas show that it was not against the Vedic philosophy.

Among modern scholars some have held that we can see at least two phases of development in Vaiṣṇavism-the earlier Aryan one and the later in which we detect non-Brahmanic elements. The later *Pañcarātra* system developed under the influence of the barbarous *ābhiras* and *saurāṣtras*.[118] Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya also is of the opinion that some of the portions of *Pañcarātra* were opposed to the vedas. According to him the Nārāyaṇīya section of the *Mahābhārata* is in agreement with

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the vedas and was composed in Kuṣāṇa times (though he says that it also shows Mahāyānic influence) and the un-Vedic *pāñcarātra* was composed after the days of Kuṣāṇas and Śaṇḍilya was the founder of this heterodox school.[119] It may be recalled that Śankarācārya specifically condemns the antivedicism of Śāṇḍilya.

An ancient writer Nāgeśa says that the Kāṇva branch of *Yajurveda* was known as *ekāyana* branch (*kāṇva śākhā-mahimā-sangraha* in Madras Government Oriental Library). Even in *Jayākhya Saṁhitā* Aupagāyana and Kauśika leaders of *Prapatti-śāstra* belonged to Kāṇva branch—

"Kāṇvīṁ śākhāmadhīyānāvaupagāyana-kauśikau
Prapatti-śāstra niṣṇātau svaniṣṭhāniṣṭhitavubhau."[120]

The other three *ṛṣis* connected with *Pāñcarātra* are also said to belong to the Kāṇva branch.[121] It has also been pointed out that Utpalācārya of Kāśmira (10th century A.D.) mentions *Pāñcarātra Śruti* and *Pāñcarātra Upaniṣad* and it is possible that till this time the *Pāñcarātra Śruti* existed and it might have been that of *ekāyana* branch.[122] This would give a definite Vedic orthodoxy to the *Pāñcarātra.*

Pāñcarātra and the Gītā

The principles of *Bhagavadgītā* are also taken by the *Pāñcarātra* and elaborated. The various manifestations of God are mentioned in the *Gītā.*[123] Except for the *vyūha* doctrine Bhandarkar thinks that the Viśvarūpa shown by the Lord to Arjuna is borrowed by the Nārāyaṇīya section where Nārada is shown the Viśvarūpa. The *Paramadharma* of the Lord is also mentioned in the *Gītā.*[124] The Lord in the *Gītā* asks the devotee to surrender to Him and the *Pāñcarātra* doctrine has elaborated it into a whole doctrine of *saranāgati* and *prapatti.* The typical pūjā is hinted at in the *Gītā* "*patraṁ puṣpaṁ....*" and in the *Pāñcarātra* the rituals are elaborated into *Pañcakarman.*[125]

Similarly, the yoga aspect is also elaborated in the *pāñcarātra.* Doctrinally the *Gītā* hints at the jīva being the *parāprakrti* of the Lord. By the time of Nārāyaṇīya section when Nārāyaṇa Viṣṇu and Kṛṣṇa's identification was complete it was natural for *Pāñcarātra* to develop the doctrines of *Gītā* also. We have already mentioned the common doctrines which led to this.[126]

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2. ibid., pp. 6-19.
3. See, H. Daniel Smith, *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Printed Texts of the Pāñcarātrāgama*, vol. I.
4. *Jayākhya Saṁhitā*, p. 8.
5. See Daniel Smith, op. cit., p. 198.

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6. Schrader, op. cit., pp. 18-19.
7. *Brahmasūtra*, II, 2.42-45.
8. *Jayākhya Saṁhitā*, Foreword, pp. 30-34.
9. "*Idaṁ mahopaniṣadaṁ catuveda-samanvitaṁ*
Sānkhya-yogakṛtaṁ tena pañcarātrānuśabditaṁ
Nārāyaṇamukhodoītaṁ nārado aśrāvayat punaḥ".
MBH, Śāntiparva, ch. 339.
10. In fact, *Jñānāmṛta-sāra-Saṁhita*, vol. 38, is a later text glorifying Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. See, Daniel, Smith, op. cit., pp. 131 ff.
11. *Nārada Pāñcarātra*, 1/44.
12. *Nārada Purāṇa*, 1.45.53.
13. "*Tatparavyūha vibhavasvabhāvādinirūpaṇaṁ Pāñcarātrāhvayaṁ tantrāṁ mokṣaikaphala-lakṣaṇaṁ*". *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, 11.64.
14. *Īśvara Saṁhitā*, 21.529-32.
15. "*Pañcetarāṇi śāstrāṇi rātrīyante mahāntyapi Tatsannidhau samākhyāsau tena loke pravartate*". *Padma Tantra*, Jñānapāda, I.
16. "*Rātrayo gocarāḥ pañca śabdādiviṣayātmikāḥ*
Mahābhūtātmakā vā atra pañcarātramidaṁ tataḥ
Avāpya tu paraṁ tejo yatraitāḥ pañcarātrayaḥ
Naśyanti pañcarātraṁ tat sarvājñānavināśanam". *Viṣṇusamhitā* quoted in *Jayākhya*, Foreword, p. 9.
17. "*Mahābhūtā guṇāh pañca rātrayo dehinah smṛtāḥ*
Tadyogādvinivṛttervā pañcarātramīti smṛtaṁ
Bhūtamātrāṇi garvaśca buddhiravyaktameva ca
Rātrayaḥ puruṣasyoktāḥ pañcarātraṁ tataḥ smṛtaḥ". *Parama Samhitā*, 1.39-40.
18. Schrader, *Introduction to the Pāñcarātra and the Ahirbudhnyā Saṁhitā*, p. 25.
19. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. XIII. 6.1.
20. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. XII. 3.4;
Suvira Jayaswal pointing to the well known *Pañcarātra sattra* of Nārāyaṇa mentioned in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, makes bold to declare it a human sacrifice. The implausibility of this suggestion hardly needs elaboration. See Suvira Jayaswal, *Origin and Development of Vaisnavism*.
21. *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, 11.64; See fn. 13.
22. *Agni Purāṇa*, XXIX. 7.
23. *MBH*, Āśvamedhika, 118-33.
24. *Pādma Saṁhitā*, caryāpāda, 13.3.
25. *Jayākhya Saṁhitā*, 22.68-74.
26. "*Eṣa Ekāyano vedaḥ prakhyātaḥ sarvato bhuvi*", *Īśvara Saṁhitā*, 1.43.
27. "*Ṛgvedaṁ bhagavoadhyemi yajurvedaṁ ... Vākovākyamekāyanaṁ*",, *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 7.1.2.
28. Baldev Upadhyaya, *Bhāgavat Sampradāya*, p. 99.
29. "*Mokṣayānāya Vai paṁthā etadanyo na vidyate*
Tasmādekāyanaṁ nāma pravadanti manīṣinaḥ", *Īśvara Saṁhitā*, 1.18.
30. However, Śankara in his commentary on the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, explains *ekāyana* as *Nītiśāstrā*, cf. *Īśādidasopanisadaḥ*, p. 542.
31. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, III. 17.6.

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32. For the similarity of their doctrines, see, Chapter—*Bhakti in Gītā*, pp. 106-145.
33. D.C. Sircar, *Studies in the Religious Life of Ancient and Medieval India*, Ch. II, p. 23. Also, R.G. Bhandarkar, *Vaisnavism, Saivism and other Minor Religious Sects*.
34. Cf., R.C. Majumdar, *Age of Imperial Unity*, Ch. XIX, "Vaiṣṇavism" by D.C. Sircar, p. 432; V.S. Agrawal, *India as known to Pāṇini*, cf. Raychowdhary, *Early History of the Vaiṣṇava Sect.*, p. 29.
35. R.C. Majumdar, *Age of Imperial Unity*, Ch. XIX, p. 432. But *contra*, K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, pp. 120-21, where it is argued that Bhakti meant political loyalty; Cf. Raychowdhary, op. cit., pp. 24, 30.
36. *Taittiriya Āraṇyaka*, X. 1.
37. For a detailed description, see, *supra* pp. 95-6.
38. Raychowdhary, *Materials for the study of the Early History of the Vaiṣṇava Sect*. p. 116.
39. D.C. Sircar, *Studies in the Religious Life of India*, p. 24.
40. Barnett too takes the term Nārāyaṇa as a *gotra* name derived from Nera, as analogous to Kāṇvāyana and Kātyāyana. See, Barnett, *The Hindu Gods and Heroes*, pp. 76-78. In this connection Suvira Jayaswal has made two points: (1) There is no evidence that Nara and Nārāyaṇa preached Sun worship (which might have led to the identification of Nārāyaṇa with Viṣṇu); (2) In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, the earliest source, speaks of Nārāyaṇa as a god (Puruṣa Nārāyaṇa=Primeval Man) and not as a human being. However, although Nārāyaṇa might originally have been the appelation of a divine being, it could have been later on applied to a deified human being. See also, Suvira Jayaswal, *Origin and Development of Vaiṣṇavism*.
41. L.B. Keny takes Nārāyaṇa to be a deity of Dravidian origin. According to him, the word is a compound word consisting of three words *nar*, *ay* and *an*; he equates *nar* with the Dravidian *nir*=water and *ay* means 'to lie in a place' whereas *an* is the Dravidian termination for a male. Thus Nārāyaṇa, according to him, was a male deity who was supposed to reside in waters. This recalls to the mind the derivation of Nārāyaṇa given by Manu "*nārā āpa iti proktāḥ* etc. cf. L.B. Keny, *ABORI*, XXIII, 1942, pp. 250-56.

    In a passage of the *Udyoga* and of the *Nārāyaṇīya* (*narānāayanam khyātamahamekaḥ sanātanaḥ*) the god is described as the refuge of all men and hence the term Nārāyaṇa. cf. *MBH*, Udyoga-parva, 68.10; Nārāyaṇīya section XII. 328.35. R.G. Bhandarkar points to the fact that while commenting on Manu, Medhātithi has explained the word in the same way, and asserts that Nārāyaṇa, thus, should mean the resting place or goal (*ayana*) of *narāḥ* or men. See, R.G. Bhandarkar, *Vaisnavism, Saivism and other Minor Religious Sects*, pp. 42-43.
42. In the 4th chapter Kṛṣṇa traces his doctrine to the Sun and later declares himself to be Viṣṇu among the Ādityas; See, *Gītā*, IV. 1-3, 10-21.
43. At first this theistic religion (round the personality of Vasudeva Kṛṣṇa) described by such names as *Ekāntika*, *Pañcarātra*, *Bhāgavata*, etc. was not recognized by the orthodox and priestly Brahmanical section but later they accepted Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa as an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu, originally an *āditya*, with a view to gaining the sympathy of the *Pañcarātrins*. See Hopkins, *Religion of India*, p. 188; R.C. Hazra, *Studies in the Upapuraṇas*, vol. I, pp. 111 ff.

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44. Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya, *Evolution of Theistic Sects in Ancient India*, p. 93.
45. S.K. Aiyangar, *Proceedings of the Second Oriental Conference*, p. 353.
46. Bhandarkar, *Vaisnavism, Saivism and other minor Religious Sects*, pp. 8, 12, 26.
47. V.S. Pathak, "The early Vaiṣṇava Pantheon", *JUPHS*, 1951-52.
48. *Caturvaktraṁ sunayanaṁ sukāntaṁ padma-pāṇinam*
Vaikuṇṭhaṁ narasimhāsyaṁ varāhaṁ kapilānanaṁ—Jayākhya Saṁhitā, 6.74.
49. "*Vaikhānasāḥ sāttvatāśca śikhyekāntikamūlakāḥ*", *Viṣṇu Samhitā*.
50. *Gītā*, X.
51. D.C. Sircar says that it might have been influenced by the installation of images of deceased ancestors in *devakulas* by the Kuṣāṇas. Actually the *devakulas* should be understood in the light of the earlier tradition. See, D.C. Sircar, *Studies in the Religious Life in Ancient and Medieval India*, p. 35.
52. "*Bhagavatāṁ Vṛṣṇīnāṁ pañcavīrāṇām pratimāḥ*", Lüders, *EI*, XXIV, p. 199 f.
53. "*Manuṣya prakṛtīn devān kirtyamānānnibodhata saṁkarṣaṇo vāsudevaḥ pradyumnaḥ sāmbā eva ca aniruddhaśca pañcaite vṛṣṇivīrāḥ prakīrtitāḥ*". *Vāyu Purāṇa*, 97. 1-2.

"Know the Gods who were (originally human and who are being sung now (by me); Saṁkarṣaṇa, Vāsudeva, Pradymna, Sāmbā and Aniruddha—these five are described as the heroes of the dynasty of the Vṛṣṇis". See also, J.N. Banerjea, "The Pañcavīras of the Vṛṣṇis", *JISOA*, X, pp. 65-68.

54. D.R. Bhandarkar, "Hathi Bāḍā Brāhmi Inscription at Nagari", *EI*, XXII, pp. 198-205.
55. D.C. Sircar, "Besanagar Garuḍa Pillar Inscription of the time of Bhāgabhadra", *Select Inscriptions*, vol. I, pp. 88-89.
56. Banerjea, "Worship of Sāmbā among the early Pañcarātrins", *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Madras, 1944, pp. 82-90; Banerjea, *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, pp. 114-15.
57. D.C. Sircar, *Studies in the Religious Life of Ancient and Modern India*, p. 35.
58. Banerjea, "Worship of Sāmbā among the early Pañcarātrins", op. cit., pp. 82-90.
59. *Bṛhat Saṁhitā*, ch. LVII, 40.
60. It has been vividly described in the *Purāṇas*, viz. *Skanda* and *Varāha Purāṇa*.
61. "*Aprākṛtaguṇasparśaṁ nirguṇaṁ parioīyate*", *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, 2.55.
62. *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, 2.53.
63. "*Ajaḍam svātmasambodhi nityaṁ sarvāvagāhanaṁ*", *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, 2.56.
64. "*Svarūpaṁ brahmanas-tacca guṇaśca parigīvate*",
Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā, 2.57; "*Ahaṁ ityāntaraṁ rūpaṁ*
jñāna-rūpaṁ-udīryate", i.e. knowledge is the inner self-consciousness; cf. *Jayākhya Saṁhitā*, 2.26.
65. This reminds one of Buddha as *dharmakāya* in the sense in which the word was used by the *Sarvāstivādins*. cf. G.C. Panda, *Bauddha Dharma ke vikās kā Itihāsa*, p. 344.
66. *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, 3.4-26; '*Ahantā paramātmanaḥ*', ibid., 3.42.
67. *Lakṣmī Tantra*, translation and notes by Sanjukta Gupta, Introduction, p. XXV.

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68. "*Lakṣmīmayaḥ samunmeṣaḥ sa dvidhā vyavatiṣṭhate Kriyāvibhūtibhedena bhūtiḥ sā ca tridhā matā*". *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, 3.28.
69. *Kriyā* is="*Lakṣmīmayaḥ prāṇarūpo viṣṇoḥ sankalpa ucyate. Svātantryamūlā icchātma prekṣārūpaḥ kriyāphalaḥ*", *ibid.*, 3.30: *Bhūti* is '*cetanācetanātmikā.* ibid., 3.31.
70. The origin of the *vyūha* theory has already been discussed under the subheading 'Origin and Development of *Pāñcarātra*', *Supra*, pp. 197-200.
71. Schrader, *Introduction to Pāñcarātra and Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, p. 35.
72. *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, 5.17-18.
73. ibid., 5.19-20.
74. "*Vāsudevonāma pāramātmocyate, Saṁkarṣaṇo nāma jīvaḥ, Pradyumno nāma manaḥ, Aniruddho nāmāhankāraḥ*", Commentary ad *Brhmasūtra*, 2.2.42.
75. *Lakṣmī Tantra*, ch. VI, 12-13.
76. '*Avinābhāva*' or '*tādātmya*' like that of *ahaṁ* and *ahamtā* or substance and function. cf. *Lakṣmī Tantra*, 11.6-7. ibid., 2.16-19; ibid., 2.5-11. They speak of *brahmādvaitaṁ*.
77. cf., *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, 5.20; ibid., 5.43, Where *vyūha* are mentioned as '*vyaktibhāvamupāgatāḥ*' or individuated manifestations.
78. *Jayākhya Saṁhitā*, 4.16-18.
79. *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, 5.21-22.
80. *Lakṣmī Tantra*, 4.15-20
81. ibid.
82. ibid., 4,19.
83. Schrader, op. cit., p. 38.
84. *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, 5.50-57; *Lakṣmī Tantra*, 11.19-25; The *avatāras* named are:

1. Padmanābha	14. Ekārṇavaśāyin.	27. Nyagrodhaśāyin.
2. Dhruva.	15. Kamatheśvara.	28. Ekasangatanu.
3. Ananta.	16. Varāha.	29. Vānaradeha.
4. Śaktyātman.	17. Nṛsimha.	30. Trivikrama.
5. Madhusūdan.	18. Pīyūṣahāraṇa.	31. Nara.
6. Vidyādhideva.	19. Śrīpati.	32. Nārāyaṇa.
7. Kapila.	20. Kāntātman.	33. Hari.
8. Viśvarūpa.	21. Rāhujit.	34. Kṛṣṇa.
9. Vihangama.	22. Kālanemighna.	35. Paraśurāma.
10. Kroḍātman.	23. Pārijātahara.	36. Rāma Dhanurdhara.
11. Baḍabāvaktra.	24. Lokanātha.	37. Vedavid.
12. Dharma.	25. Śāntātman.	38. Kalkin.
13. Vagīśvara.	26. Dattātreya.	39. Pātālaśayana.

85. Schrader, op. cit., p. 49.
86. *Yaḥ pṛthivyāṁ tiṣṭhan prthivya aṁtaro yaṁ prthivī na veda, Yasya pṛthivī śarīraṁ yaḥ pṛithvimantaro yamayati eṣa te ātmā antaryamyamṛtaḥ*", *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 3.7.3.
87. . . . . *hareḥ śaktiṁ pañcakṛtyakarīṁ namaḥ*".
Ahirbudhnya Samhitā, 1.2.8; *Lakṣmī Tantra*, 12-13, 14.
88. *Ahirbudhnya Samhitā*, 6.21-22.
89. ibid., 6.33-34.

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90. *Svetaśvatara Up.* III, 14.
91. *Gītā*, VII. 4.12; ibid., VII. 13.
91. "*Tirodhānakarī śaktih sā nigraha samāhvayā*", *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, 14.15.
92. *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, 14.20.
93. "*Yathā hi moṣakāḥ pānthe paribarhamupeyuṣi*
Nivṛttamoṣaṇodyogāḥ samāḥ santa udāsate
Anugrahātmikāyāstu sakteḥ-pāta-kṣaṇe tathā
Udāsāte samībhuya karmaṇī te śubhāśubhe", *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, 14.34-35.
94. "*Samprāpya Jñānabhūyastvaṁ nirmalīkṛtacetanaḥ*
Anāvilamasaṅkleśaṁ Vaiṣṇavaṁ tad viśet padaṁ", ibid., 14.41.
95. "*Anādivāsanāyukto jīvoyaṁ vai cidātmakaḥ*
Sa hi saṅkalpayāmāsa mokṣosyāstu karmiṇaḥ
Tato viśvātmaatktissā tadicohānuvidhāyinī
Pratyakcetanamāśritva tatkṣanādavatiṣṭhate
Mantraśaktirivādṛṣyā tayā smabodhito dvija
Tviṣākrāntasvarūpaśca pratyagātmā cidātmakāḥ
Brahmaṇyekātmatāṁ yāti karmavarge kṣayaṁ gate".
Jayākhya Saṁhitā, 3.17, 20-22. cf. *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, 14.28-35 where *Anugrahaśakti=Vaiṣṇavī kṛpā=śaktipāta.* God's grace is like a 'rain of compassion' (*Karuṇā-varṣā*). It produces *Kṣamasāmya.*
96. With the *guru-prasāda* of *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, cf. *Jayākhya Saṁhitā*, 1.57-65.
97. "*Tasya brahmasamāpattiryāpunarbhavatā ca sā*", *Jayākhya Saṁhitā*, 4.52.
98. ibid., 4.52-53; ibid., 4.120 ff. It gives a series of comparisons, to illustrate the merger of the soul in God.
99. Cf., *Lakṣmī Tantra*, 6.36—"*Pramātā cetanaḥ prokto matsaṅkocaḥ sa ucyate*". In the Śaiva doctrine the contraction is of Śiva.
100. *Lakṣmi Tantra*, Translation and notes. Sanjukta Gupta, Introduction, p. xxxiv.
101. *Pādma Tantra*, IV.
102. Schrader, op. cit., pp. 91-92. This passage of the *Pādmatantra* has been diversely interpreted. Srinivasa Aiyangar interprets it monistically. cf., *Outline of Indian Philosophy*, pp. 184-85; see also, B. Kumarappa, *The Hindu Conception of the Deity*, pp. 121-22.
103. "*Yathāhuḥ Pāñcarātrikāḥ Amukterbheda eva syāt jīvasya*
ca parasya ca. Muktasya tu no bhedosti bheda hetora-bhāvataḥ". *Bhāmatī* and *Brahmasūtra*, 1.4.21.
104. *Jayākhya Saṁhitā*, 4.50.
105. *Lakṣmī Tantra*, 17.49, 59.
106. *Lakṣmī Tantra*, XVI. 32. Here *sākṣātkāra-sthiti* is described as arising out of grace—*mat prasāda-samudbhavā.*
107. *Lakṣmī Tantra*, ch. 17; *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, ch. 2 37.
108. *Lakṣmī Tantra*, 17.75—*Nikṣepa=Nyāsa=Sannyāsa=Tyāga=Śaraṇāgati.*
109. Cf. also, *Gītā*, II. 7.
110. "*Ahamsmyaparādhānamālayokiñcanoagatiḥ.*
Tvamevopāyabhūto me bhaveti prārthanā mathiḥ
Śaraṇāgatirityuktā sā deve asmiṅ prayujyatāṁ", *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā*, 37.31.

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111. "*Anukūlasya saṅkalpaḥ pratikūlasya varjanaṁ*
Rakṣiṣyatiti viśvāso goptṛtvavaraṇam tathā
Ātmanikṣepakārpaṇye sadvidhā śaraṇāgatiḥ".
Ahirbudhnya Saṁhitā. 37.27-29; See also, *Lakṣmī Tantra*, 17.60-61.

112. *Lakṣmī Tantra*, 17.101-102.

113. Cf. *Commentary on Lakṣmī Tantra*, pp. 59-60.

114. P.N. Srinivaschari, "*Philosophy of Viśiṣṭadvaita*", p. 383.
cf. M.V. Srinivasmurthy, *Vaisnavism of Śankardeva and Rāmānuja*, ch. VI.

115. "*Abhigamanopādānejyāsvādhyāyayogairvarṣaśataṁ iṣṭvā*
Kṣīṇakleśo bhagavantam eva pratipadyata iti". cf. Śankara, ad *Brahmasūtra*, 2.2, 42.

116. Commentary and *Brahmasūtras*. 2.2.42-45.

117. For details see chapters—"Śankara and Rāmānuja" and "Bhakti in the Vedas and Upaniṣads".

118. R.G. Bhandarkar, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-38; J.N. Banerjea, *Pauranic and Tantric Religion*, pp. 39 ff; H.C. Raychaudhari, *Early History of the Vaisnava Sect*. pp. 144 ff.

119. Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya, *Evolution of the Theistic Sects in Ancient India*, pp. 158-59.

120. *Jayākhya Saṁhitā*, 6.109.

121. *Śāndilyaśca Bharadvājo manirmauñjāyanastathā*
Imān ca pañcāgotrasthā mukhyāḥ kāṇvīmupāśritāḥ
Śrī Pañcarātratantrīye sarveasmin mama karmaṇi", *Jayākhya Saṁhitā*, 6.116.

122. Baldev Upādhyaya, *Bhāgvat Sampradāya*, pp. 112-115.
(a) "*Pañcarātra Śrutāvapi. Yadvat sopānena prasadmaruheta,*
plavena va nadīṁ taret, tadvat śāstreṇaiva bhagavān śāstā avagantavyaḥ".
(b) "*Pañcarātropaniṣadi ca jñātā ca jñeyaṁ ca vaktā ca vācyaṁ ca bhoktā ca bhogyaṁ ca*". *Spandapradīpikā*, quoted from Baldev Upadhyaya, *Bhāgavat Sampradāya*, p. 99.

123. The Lord says in the *Gītā* that whatever form the devotee worships he makes his faith steady in that form only. cf. *Gītā*. VII.21. His *vibhava* form is throughout mentioned. He throughout declares himself as an *avatāra*. cf. *Gītā*, IV.7.

Antaryāmī form—a devotee sees God in all beings and all beings in God. cf. *Gītā*, IV. 35: VI.30; VI.29.

Arcā form—The lord says that his devotee can worship Him even by offering Him a single flower or leaf. This shows that his image must have been worshipped. Cf. *Gītā*. IX.26. Besides whatever form the devotee worships he makes his faith steady in that form. ibid., VII.21. This also leads us to think that if the devotee sees God in his image He condescends to come down there.

Para form—"knowing other higher nature which is the soul by which the world is held. ibid., VII.5. His transcendent nature. ibid., VII.3.

124. *Gītā*, VIII.20-22.

125. ibid., IX.26.

126. *Supra*, pp. 192-200.

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7

Contribution of the Alvars and Nayanars

Historical Position and Background

The history of bhakti is the history of a growing spiritualization of religion, i.e. to say of a movement increasingly away from external ritualism in practice and a growing sense of the nearness of the deity in experience. Changes in theory, practice and experience are inter-connected and have repeated themselves at different levels. Thus, early Vedic spontaneity was followed by Vedic ritualism, which again became intereriorized in Upaniṣadic contemplation and gnosis. In the upaniṣads the notion of a deity became fully spiritualized. The one God is now a spiritual Reality. In the *Bhagvadgītā* the supreme spirit is humanized in the concept of the incarnation. This naturally placed the establishing of a human relationship between man and God in the centre of religious worship. In the *Gītā*, however, it is simultaneously realized that if God approaches man it is as an incarnation and thus facilitates man's approach to him. It, nevertheless, remains necessary for man to get beyond the limiting and binding aspect of his humanity. If communion between man and God requires the humanization of God it also requires the divinization of man. It is in this context of self-transcendence by man that karma and jñāna figure. Man must act by self-abnegation and know that he has no kinship with the world and ephemeral things. Only then does he become a fit recipient of divine bliss and is able to enter the realm of *sādhya-bhakti*. In the *Pāñcarātra Saṁhitās* the concepts of grace and surrender are joined to an elaborate body of ritual relating to worship of images as also inward contemplation and *japa*. The *Pāñcarātra Saṁhitas* develop the doctrine of the *Gītā* in two respects: in the first place, they add the concepts of the *vyūha* and *arcā* forms of the Lord to the notion of *avatāra* and *vibhūti*, as presented in the *Gītā*, in the second place, they seek to fill a lacuna in the *Gītā*. The *Gītā* speaks of karma and bhakti but only describes the attitude underlying them instead of giving detailed practical prescriptions. The *Pāñcarātra Saṁhitās* formulate the detailed course of action for the worship of God.

So long we have met with the abstract concept of bhakti alongside with the modes of concrete worship and the notion of the object of worship embroidered

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in his incarnations with numerous myths and legends. We have not, however, met with an expression of the concrete experience of bhakti. This is partly to be attributed to the nature of the śāstra which tends to be theoretical and prescriptive rather than expressive or personal. In the Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva Tamil saints of the Pallave age, we meet an entirely new phenomenon or rather with the first extant literary expression of a new kind. The *Āḻvārs* take for granted the system of beliefs and ritual practice such as we find in the *Pāñcarātra Āgamas*. They are, however, concerned with the expression of their personal spiritual experience. The relationship between the hymns of the *Āḻvārs* and the earlier *Āgamas* may be compared with the relationship between Kālidāsa and Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*. The śāstra formulates principles and precepts of a theological kind, the hymns give an expression to what one actually experiences by following those prescriptions creatively. In any case it is for the first time in these hymns that we see the nature of bhakti as love, i.e. of *rāgātmika bhakti* and also glimpses of what *parā bhakti* or *sādhya bhakti* might be. Just as the classical poets like Kālidāsa were succeeded by a new and deeper analysis of poetic experience in the writings and critics like Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta, similarly the expression of bhakti in these hymns was followed by a new and deeper phenomenology of spiritual experience which was begun by the ācāryas in the tenth century and reached its culmination in the sixteenth century. Bhakti, as love, was first realized and expressed by Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva saints between the sixth and the ninth centuries A.D., which was followed by a philosophy of love and a simultaneous reformulation of the notion of the deity and his relation to the human soul in the following six centuries reaching its climax in the school of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. That Namāḻvāra was not followed by a phenomenologist of love comparable to the Gauḍīya Gosvāmīs is perhaps to be attributed to the more polemical and controversial atmosphere of the religious life in the earlier centuries. In fact, from the fifth to the eighth centuries Buddhist and Jaina philosophers had to be constantly controverted and after the eighth century the Advaitins became an equally grave challenge. As a result, the earlier Śrī Vaiṣṇava ācāryas from Nāthamuni to Rāmānuja had to attend to the defence of the metaphysical presuppositions of bhakti rather than to the elaboration of the phenomenology of divine life. Nevertheless, the hymns of the *Āḻvārs* and the *Nāyanārs* made bhakti a well-established ideal for all and sundry and thus carried an earnest message of personal religion to the people. The following pages seek to bring out the character of bhakti as expressed in Tamil hymns and relate it to earlier traditions as also to indicate their original achievement. It must be remembered, however, that the personality of the saint or the mystic is an essential and perhaps the most creative aspect of new religious developments. The personalities of the different saints can hardly be separated from their works. It is, however, not intended to bring out the full individual depth of each saint but only to indicate the general tendencies which they express and share.

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The *Āḷvārs* were soutl. Indian Vaiṣṇava mystics. They are called the 'morning stars', of the medieval bhakti movement.[1] They had before them a tradition of the upaniṣads and the *Gītā* which helped them form their basic philosophy concerning God. Their theology was completed by accepting the ideas of the *Pāñcarātra Āgamas* and the *Purāṇas*. But the contribution of *Āḷvārs* is more than a synthesis of all these. They were not only speculative mystics, but their language and expression together with the tradition about them show that they had personal experience of what they wrote. This helped a lot in the wide spreading of the idea of devotion as a fervid emotional surrender to God (as the *Āḷvārs* used to go from place to place addressing psalms to the manifestations of Viṣṇu) and secondly, they supplied the philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita with a solid background. They bridged the gap between the *Pāñcarātra* and the ācāryas of Viśiṣṭādvaita and resembled the medieval Indian mystics of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries for, they too were drawn from all walks of life and carried to the people the message of a simple but intense personal religion of piety, purity and love of God. It was a far cry from the ritualized hieratic religion of the chosen castes and carried to its logical culmination the demotism and personalism implicit in the attitude of bhakti which may be said to have come of age in them.

Sources of the Āḷvārs

Three main sources have been noted for the study of *Āḷvārs*—(1) legendary lives of the saints which were not earlier than Rāmānuja; (2) contemporary inscriptions on stone or metal; (3) collections of their hymns called *Nāḷayira Divya Prabandham*, compiled by Nāthamuni.

The second of these could be the most significant, but has not been sufficiently worked out. The first is not of much historical importance. The result is that our knowledge of the lives and times of the *Āḷvārs* is extremely hazy.

The traditional date for the *Āḷvārs* is 4203-2706 B.C. The modern scholars do not believe in such an early date for obvious historical reasons. According to S. Krishnaswamy Aiyangar, the earliest *Āḷvārs* must have flourished in the second century A.D.,[2] but many scholars place the earliest *Aḷvārs* about the sixth or seventh century A.D. T.A. Gopinath Rao has correctly argued that Mamallai was the birth place of Bhūttatārāḷvār and Mamallai is Mahābalipuram which was established by Narsimha Varman I in the middle of the seventh century A.D. This shows that Bhūttatārāḷvār and his contemporaries Pey and Poygai could not be earlier than the seventh century A.D.[3] D.C. Sircar[4] places the *Āḷvārs* roughly between the sixth and the ninth century A.D. He says that the first three *Aḷvārs* cannot be placed earlier than the Gupta Age. All the *Āḷvārs* appear to have flourished before the early Vaiṣṇava Ācārya Nāthamuni (tenth or eleventh century A.D.). Nilakanta Sastri argues from the nonsectarian simplicity of the hymns and their style and metre that the earlier *Aḷvārs* could not have been later than the fifth or sixth century A.D.[5]

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Hooper opines that they appeared as a reaction against the attributeless absolute of Buddhism and Jainism which had so completely moralized religion, excluding from it all the emotional glow that comes from devotion to a personal God and had made it mostly a matter of ethical teaching so that the hungry human heart was ready to turn to a religion that would give it someone to love and worship. The prevalence of Buddhism and Jainism in the south in this period is attested even by Hsūan Chwang.[6] It is, thus, possible that the theistic and pietistic religion of the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava saints of this period could have been at least partly a reaction against the impersonal and atheistic tendencies of the two ascetic religions.

Characteristic features of Bhakti in the Āḷvārs and the nature of their mysticism

Mystical experience is the direct experience of the presence of the divine being. "It involves a simplicity, a certain passivity in the sense that the mystic experiences it effortlessly". It can also be said to be acknowledged by way of love.[7] There is a difference between transcendental mysticism and religious or theistic mysticism. The former could also be seen in the upaniṣads. The mysticism of the *Āḷvārs* belongs to the latter category. K.C. Varadachari points out the difference between the two by saying that in "transcendental mysticism the individual soul dissolves in the deepest union and so has the experience of God as He is Himself, whereas in the religious mysticism it is the experience of God by the individual as God is for the individual in His fullest plentitude".[8] The former seeks total identity, the latter an intimate union which does not negate all difference. The object of experience, the means of realization and the end—all three differ in the two experiences. The object of transcendental mystics is the attributeless, timeless absolute, whereas that of theistic mystic is the God of love or mercy. The end of advaitic mysticism is to achieve the identity between the individual self and the universal self, whereas the end of theistic mysticism is the union of the self with God without losing personal identity.

The means to achieve transcendental mysticism are discriminative knowledge, non-attachment, peace, bhakti, etc. but of these the best means is jñāna. The other means only prepare the way for jñāna. But the sole means in theistic mysticism is bhakti, devotion and surrender to the Lord. The *Āḷvārs* literature provides the best example for a deep study in theistic mysticism. All the essential characteristics of the theistic mysticism are seen in the hymns of the *Āḷvārs* which represent the earliest examples of such experience in the Indian tradition. These hymns are marked by their spontaneity of expression, sense of emotional ecstacy and longing and a pervasive sense of beauty. As simple and unpremeditated outpourings of the heart, these have become a part of the daily life of the people and constitute one of the most important and persistent factors shaping the religious attitude of the south.

Almost all human relationships which are based on love are conceived of by the *Āḷvārs*—mother-child, slave-master, and lover-beloved. This makes their love

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a very intense and personal one. In some, the description of God involves elaborate symbolism as in *Tiruviruttam* of Nammālvār. The *Āḻvārs* accepted the five-fold manifestations of God—described in the *pāṇcarātra āgamas*, especial importance being given by them to the *arcā* form. For them the icon was God himself and not a mere symbol of God.

The grace of God is an important aspect of the *Pāñcarātra āgamas*. The also *Āḻvārs* accepted this. We attain Him through His grace and not by our works, intellect or charity. This leads to the path of surrender to bliss alone, through wearing His feet on one's head. Service to the lord was more important to them than liberation. This is suggested by various hymns especially those of Viṣṇucitta.

As we have seen above, the ultimate aim is a perfect union with God and not a complete merging in Him. Here again, the *Āḻvārs* seem to have been impressed by the *Pāñcarātra* philosophy. Hooper says that the goal of the *Āḻvārs* is seen to vacillate between two alternatives as is the case with mystics in every land and age First, there is a normal human longing for a relation of conscious love and trust between man and God. Secondly, there is the goal of complete absorption—as suggested in the stories of Āṇḍāl and Tiruppāṇ. But it is not necessary that the stories of Āṇḍāl and Tiruppāṇ show a goal of complete absorption in God. It seems to indicate a perfect unification with God, which was also in keeping with the general trend of their hymns.

God is above the conflicts of morality. Yet, He condescends to uplift His devotee if he becomes a prey to wrong conduct. This is illustrated by the story of Vipranārāyaṇa[9] as also of Tirumangai. The fervent glow of emotion for the Lord makes all else seem trivial in the world. Man is freed from the fetters of *karman* by devotion alone. The importance of guru is seen from the hymns of Madhurapāṇi who was a great devotee of his guru—Śaṭhakopa or Nammāḻvār.

Again, the bhakti of the *Āḻvārs* was a socially catholic movement. It knew no barriers of caste. The story of Tiruppāṇ Āḻvār shows that anyone could become the guru.

Influence of the Vedas, Upaniṣads and early Vaiṣṇava tradition

Great similarity with the Upaniṣadic teachings is found in their hymns. We can glean in the hymns of Poygai Āḻvār the teachings of *Iśopaniṣad*. He says that he will not hanker after anyone's wealth,[10] that everything belongs to Him, which reminds one of the lines "*Īśāvasyamidaṁ sarvaṁ yatkiñca jagatyāṁ jagat*," etc. He says that those who meditate on the name of God do not tread the path of pain[11] and in the *Īśopaniṣad*, again, we find the lines—"For him who has seen himself in God and God in himself where is the delusion, where is fear (*ko mohaḥ kaśśokaḥ*)". Again, when Pey Āḻvār says, "To such a God who has completely occupied me both within and without, have I become a slave"[12] he echoes the Upaniṣadic truth that the Divine is established in all, pervading both inside and outside. The *Tirucchanda Viruttam*

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or Bhaktisāra is a very philosophical poem. In this the cosmic categories are dealt with at great length. The first five verses describe the categories of existence which are said to have their source in Brahman. The very opening verse declares, "Having become the five in the earth, in the water the four, in fire the three, in the strong wind the two, in the above (ether) the one, becoming distinguished as different from these who can know Thy Being".

The Upaniṣadic doctrine that everything is pervaded by Brahman and so the individual should know and enjoy with a feeling of the Divine presence in all[13] is seen in the third verse of *Tirucchanda Viruttam* where it is said that He made the five *bhūtas*, five *tanmātrās* and sense organs, etc. and having become the self in all these and the first cause "who can see in the world the five (transcendent forms of Thee) becoming in the five places for the (enjoyment through) the five (sense organs) and the five (motor organs)". This shows clearly that His omni-pervasiveness is the basis of His enjoyability in all nature from the manifest to the unmanifest. All are instruments for the enjoyment of God. This principle shows supreme love for God. We know that bliss is the ultimate human end and as God is the natural object of the mind, it finds infinite happiness in its ultimate source which is God.

Many Vedic myths such as of Trivikrama or the highest heaven of Viṣṇu are alluded to by the *Āḷvārs* and they take for granted a good deal of early Vaiṣṇava legends and myths about Kṛṣṇa's life and deeds at Mathurā as also about the description of Viṣṇu and his consort. They again assume the elements of Vaiṣṇava *caryā* or *pāvai*, as it is termed.

The first three *Āḷvārs*—Poygai, Pūtattār or Bhūtattārālvār and Pey—all three of them are known to have miraculous origins as they are believed to have been born out of flowers.[14] There is a well known and moving myth about them that they were going from place to place in search of God and chanced to meet under a common roof when there was a heavy downpour of rain. It was such a small room that they had to huddle together. They felt another being amidst them. It has been said that the first Poygai Āḷvār intuited God's existence through his transcendent knowledge (*prajñāna*), the second Pūtattār through maturing gnosis passing into devotion (*parā bhakti*) and the third Pey through the intuitive union of knowledge and devotion (*parama jñāna*) attained the supreme vision of His form with His Spouse.[15]

Poygai Āḷvār

God's wondrous nature is described throughout which generates bhakti in the devotee's heart "deeming the world as bowl, the full sea as ghee, the fierce rayed sun as the luminous wick, I have twined a garland of speech for the feet of Him who wields the red flaming discus so that there may be freedom from the ocean of misery".[16]

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Here is an example of the prayer of glorification and prayer of petition both in one. God is described as the great controller and is also invoked to free the individual from the misery of existence compared to the ocean.

The *Āḻvārs* seems to be fascinated by the various myths—the myth of ocean-churning, the Vāmana myth, etc. and he remembers the measureless qualities revealed in these myths, as is seen in the second verse of the *Mudal Tiruvandādi*. In verse eight he says, "It is said that Thou didst eat the earth, the mountains, the wave-beating ocean, air and the sky...was thy mouth as big as the universe ?"[17]

God's transcendence does not prevent Him from coming to His devotees. This accessibility (*saulabhya*) is seen in his *Trivikrama* aspect. He is called the *āśritabhāvya*.[18] This quality of His is seen in His coming down amidst the mortals as avatārs. Among the five manifestations of the Lord the *arcā* form is praised much. God is said to dwell at Tiruvengadam, in the celestial city (*Vinnagaram*), at the shrine of *Yathoktakāri* and at the temple of Tirukkoilur.

The devotee's attitude towards God is of intense love. He should remember God in every way—by praise or accusation or even offence against Him.

> 'O mind ! praise thou Him who is adorned with beautiful leaves of Tulasi! or accuse or do evil or desire Him as thou pleasest. He is the supporter of the watery ocean, the mountain, the wide sky, the air, the body, and the soul".[19]

This view is often met within the *Purāṇas*. Even those who hated God intensely received his grace as, for example, Śiśupāla.

In verse twelve Poygai says that one should offer all one's organs of sense and activity and the mind and ego and *buddhi* to God. These should be directed and dedicated to Him. In verse thirty he compares the yearning of the soul for God with a calf panting for its mother. The grace of God is obtained by "wearing the feet of God" or by utter dependence on Him, as meditation and other means are difficult because of the transcendental nature of God. This reminds one of the *Gītā* and the *Pāñcarātra* praise of *nyāsa*.

Bhūtāttar

His work is known as *Irendām Tiruvandādi*. Later ācāryas of bhakti as Madhusūdana Sarasvatī opine that *parā-bhakti* is the state of the mind in a molten state overcome with feeling but flowing in a continuous stream and has God for its object.[20] This is seen in the very first hymn of *Irendām Tiruvandādi*.

> "Devotion as the lamp bowl, aspirations as ghee, the mind that has melted out of delight as the wick, with melting soul have I lighted the bright flame of devotion to Nārāyaṇa in the revealed Tamil language in verse".[21]

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Three important factors for the attainment of this *parā-bhakti* are aspiration, the melting of the mind (called *cittadruti* by ācāryas of bhakti such as Madhusūdana Sarasvatī) and the melting of soul itself, i.e. the state when the devotee attains perfect union with the Lord.

Pūtattār was greatly impressed by the various avatāras. He enumerates the exploits of Vāmana, Trivikrama,[22] the incident of Pūtanā,[23] Varāha avatāra[24] and Nṛsimhāvatāra[25]. The various episodes from the life of Kṛṣṇa held particular interest for him, e.g. the episode of Kṛṣṇa getting down from the chariot to slay Bhīṣma in spite of his vow not to take a weapon in his hand in the war of the *Mahābhārata*. This incident shows the utmost love of God for His devotees and hence it appealed to him much.

Bhūtam claimed a constant vision of the divine in sleep[26] as well as in the waking state and emphasized the importance of constant remembrance. Those, who incessantly repeat the names of Nārāyaṇa knowing well the reason for praising Him, will thus enjoy Him with us.[27] This is reminiscent of the *Dhruvā Smṛti* of Rāmānuja.

Pey

His greatness lay in his knowledge and vision of the Divine from a deeper perception of God's eternal divinity as the Divine Two, comprising Nārāyaṇa and his consort Śrī. His perception shows the redemptive Grace of God to one who has verily entered Him. In the words of Varadachari.

> "The impersonal or logical highest of the first *Āḷvārs* melts imperceptibly into the personal Highest of Pūtattār and grows into the experience of Grace inseparably united with the person who is the primal cause of all, the support and sustenance of all the worlds."[28]

The whole world is described as the body of the Lord.[29] He "resides in the milk ocean as *vyūha*, in Venkaṭāchala (as *arcā*), in the primeval ocean as serpent (*ananta*), cool heaven (*vaikuṇṭha*) and the ocean of scriptures (veda) which contain occult truths and in the minds (hearts) of yogis (*hārda*) who have made their minds rest in their hearts."[30] This is a very personal description of God. Everything about Him is beautiful and tender like the lotus.[31] He is the healer of all sorrows and the destroyer of all sins.[32] He possesses Śrī in his divine heart. Śrī is regarded as the power aspect of śakti or Lord but not so much the power of knowledge or creative novelty but the power of Love itself—hence the concept of Śrīnivāsa. Śri is hence, also the principle of redemptive grace. This is clearly in line with such *Pāñcarātra* texts as the *Lakṣhmī Tantra*.

Pey also claimed the vision of God—

> "Thinking, keeping the lamp of knowledge, searching for the Lord have I possessed Him now. The wonderful Lord of all having entered into me

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inseparably (never to seperate again) has stood, sat and lain Himself down in me".[33]

Again, there are numerous references to the exploits of the Lord as various avatāras. The incidents of Dantavakra, Pūtanā, Hiraṇyakaśipu and Gajendramokṣa are mentioned. The Trivikrama exploit is most frequently referred to.[34]

Bhaktisāra or the Āḷvār of Tirumaliśai

His birth is shrouded in mystery and he was said to perform miracles even from his childhood. At first he was a Śaivite and is even said to have practised Jainism and Buddhism but ultimately he became a staunch Vaiṣṇava. His hymns are collected in *Nānmukhan Tiruvandādi* and *Tirucchanda Viruttam*. He was probably an elder contemporary of Pallava Mahendravarman I and is said to have been brought up by a śūdra.[35]

Nature of God

We have seen before[36] how the Upaniṣadic teachings about the Divine influenced Bhaktisāra in *Tirucchanda Viruttam*. In the *Nānmukhan Tiruvandādi* he implies that only the devotee can know Him who is incomparably great and his nature is thoroughly enjoyable.[37] There is also a much more personal description of God. He is said to have begotten the fourfaced (*Brahmā*).[38] He is the ordainer of all fruits,[39] the creator of all gods, men, nature, and plants.[40] Can there be anything which cannot be attained of Him, who is the ruler of the ten directions? Being the one ordainer of the seven notes of music and nine sentiments of *rasas* who descended for the sake of the good of fourteen worlds, ten times into them and is the one who had incarnated previously.[41]

His manifestations as *vibhava* and avatāras are considered to be very important to religious consciousness.[42] He descends among mankind as He has *āśritavātsalya, saulabhya* (easy accessibility), and *sauśīlya* (excellent virtuous nature). He refers to Rāma, Varāha, Vāmana, Trivikrama, Kṛṣṇa, Narasimha and Matsya. He also mentions the *vyūhas*—"one person in all four persons, being thus the enjoyable being the person realized through merit, and the person of many manifestational forms.

> O Primeval Lord, lying on the serpent in the milk ocean and being beyond it, Thou art the Transcendent, and special forms."[43]

The attitude of the Lord towards His devotees is one of gracious love—

> "The Lord who has the discus, who appears as if having His love for his devotees itself as His body, granting to them the pleasure of this world, as the protecting deity, Ruler, Heaven, coolness, relations, Mother and every other, Himself finally makes man attain the supreme above".[44]

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God runs after His devotees.[45] The devotee, on the other hand, is almost love sick with the Lord of Veṅkaṭa. "I have been caught in the net called the feet of the Lord of Śrī".[46]

The bhakta is to adopt the path of *śaraṇāgati* or absolute surrender to God. In the *Tirucchanda Viruttam*,[47] he refers to the eight-fold way of surrender to God. In addition to the well known six—*anukūlasya sankalpa, pratikūlavarjanaṁ, goptṛtva-varaṇaṁ, viśvāsa, ātmanikṣepa* and *kārpaṇyam*, the other two are self discipline (*svaniṣṭhā* and disciplined faith in the ācārya (*ācāryaniṣṭhā*).[48]

Then the devotee receives God's grace—

'O Lord of Raṅga: Thou art difficult to obtain through one's own efforts. Thou art running after thy devotees'.[49]

While these four Āḷvārs are generally held to have been the earlier ones, possibly as early as the 5th century A.D., the remaining eight Āḷvārs were more or less contemporaries in or about the 8th century.[50] Of their works the most voluminous is that of the last or 12th Āḷvār, Tirumangai.[51]

Tirumangai

He was a petty chieftain who ruled Alinadu in Tanjore district. Some scholars assign him to 7th century A.D., and the others to 8th century A.D. D.C. Sircar[52] says that there is a story that Tirumangai was a contemporary of the Śaiva saint Tirujñāna Sambandhar who was himself a contemporary of the Pallava king Narasimhavarman I (A.D. 630-38) of Kāñchi. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri[53] says that Tirumangai mentions the siege of Kāñchipuram by Vairamegha, i.e. the first Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Dantidurga (mid. 8th century A.D.).

His hymnal collection comprises the *Periya* (Big) *Tirumoli* and constituted almost one-third of the *Nāḷāyira Prabandhaṁ*. He sings passionately of his seeking for the Lord and of His grace which gives refuge to all, however lowly.[54] Tirumangai has been called "a master of the spiritual art of divine love". His *madals* are not merely compositions written in a particular metre but express the idea of great love. The sentiment behind the *madal*, which was an act of suicide by the lovers, was an ardent love that lays bare the whole heart in front of the beloved who does not heed. This *madal* is utilized in a spiritual way for a spiritual goal as an *aṅga* of *śaraṇāgati* to express extreme helplessness. It gives an expression to the spiritual madness of the Āḷvār.

In the *Periya Tirumadal* he says that as men practise various austerities to attain mokṣa, it is not worth much. We are not even sure whether they really get it. The results of dharma are also unenduring since when the merit is exhausted, one has to return to this world. Hence only love remains the ultimate end to be sought by man, the basic *puruṣārtha*.

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In his *Tiruvelukurrirukkai* he sings prayers of glorification and surrender to God. He sings the greatness of God by mentioning the incident of Rāma's destroying Laṅkā, Trivikrama incident, Gajendramokṣa, etc. then asks for shelter.

Periya Āḻvār

Periya Āḻvār or Viṣṇucitta is assigned to the beginning of the 9th century by Nilakanta Sāstri. His hymns can be seen in *Periyāḻvār Tirumoli*. In this he relates his experiences assuming the role of the parents of Kṛṣṇa and associates of Kṛṣṇa.[55] It is a deep study of the relationship of *vātsalya* and *sakhya* between man and God and leads to the awareness of Reality both as a personal Being and as a transcendent universal Being.

He was so much smitten by the love of God that in his *Tiruppallāndu* in the third and fourth verses he speaks of exclusive devotion to God and service to Him through births.[56] Renunciation for him means renunciation of everything except the Lord's service. He prays for eternal years of God's residence on earth. This might mean that the feeling of devotion might remain forever, and also that various manifestations especially the *arcā* form should live for eternal years. In the *Tiruppajlāndu*, he says that he loves to wear the cloth worn by the deity, to eat His discarded food, to wear His garland of Tulasī.[57] These *prasādas* wese remnants of offerings to God. The idea was that man must receive all after having been used by Him.[58]

Godā Āṇḍāl

Periyāḻvār was her foster father. From her childhood she developed the ambition of a glorious wedding with the Lord. Her devotion shows *mādhurya bhakti* in the most intense form like that of the *gopīs* of the *Bhāgavata*. Her two works *Tiruppāvāi*[59] and *Nācciyār Tirumoli* are full of hymns showing this aspect of bhakti.

In the *Tiruppāvāi* she is seen to observe the fast of Kātyāyanī[60] which the *gopīs* performed to attain Kṛṣṇa as their husband.[61] The hymns of *Tiruppāvāi* lay stress on bodily and mental purity, and on fixing one's consciousness to the attainment of the Lord.

Parāśara Bhaṭṭa, the great ācārya of Vaiṣṇavism, praises Godā as the wonderful lady who by her flower-garland already worn by her, forcibly awakened Kṛṣṇa sleeping on *Nīlādevi* and taught Him the transcendent truth of His own being.[62] Śrī or Divine mother is sought by Godā as the supreme teacher and companion and guide who also acts as the mediator between the soul and Divine.

In the *Nācciyār Tirumoli*, she constantly dreams of her beloved and prays sleeplessly for the fulfilment of her desire. She finds His beauty irresistible. Sleep becomes impossible for her. Actually she considered Reality as union with God and communion with God. The ordinary wakeful state is like a dream to her. In *Nācciyār Tirumoli*, she seems to be lost in dreaming about the dalliance with God.

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This anticipation sometime wakes her to gloom and distress also. She does not get either peace of mind or body. This work is a study in rapture. The whole gamut of sensory, vital, erotic and spiritual feelings can be seen in it. Here we have an extraordinary development of *madhura-bhakti.* The great Vedāntadeśika in his *Godāstuti* declares that all the other Āḷvārs have transmuted their bhakti into *śṛngāra* taking their cue from Goḍā.[63] Her hymn '*Varaman ayiram*', etc. speaking of her dream-marriage with Viṣṇu, is still sung at all Vaiṣṇava, Brāhmaṇa marriages.[64]

Tiruppāṇ

Tiruppāṇ belonged to the untouchable caste and only ten verses sung by him are obtained.[65]

God is described as the taintless origin of all, resplendent, immaculate, holy, upholder of the right.[66] He refers to the Trivikrama avatāra of the Lord and also as Rāma.[67] He is smitten by the beauty of the Lord : "Thy waist girdle is now absorbing all my attention".[68] "The chest adorned with Mother Śrī and the pearl garland, has made me the slave of its beauty.[69] "O Raṅganātha, I now behold thy gracious neck that proffers me deliverance and divine life".[70] "Thy lips have enslaved my mind". "Thy beautiful body is like the mountain green".[71] "Thy dark broad eyes shining with red lines and with long eye lashes have entranced me truly".[72] "The blue body of the Divine child on the banyan leaf has now wholly come into my view".[73]

Vipranārāyaṇa (Toṇḍaradippodi)

The *Guruparamparā* mentions that he was born in 2814 B.C. Modern scholars place him in the 7th century A.D. He composed two works *Tirumālai*[74] and *Tiruppalliveḷucci.*[75] The well known legend of his life story marks him the most romantic of the Āḷvārs,

He sings of the nature of God, His beauty and His Grace. God is the first Being and has the three functions of creation, preservation and destruction of the world.[76] He possesses a graceful body, his mouth is like red coral, rosy eyes like the lotus.[77] His beauty is beyond description. Even if a sinful person utters His name as Kṣatrabandhu did, he attains the highest state.[78] "There is no other God than He to save".[79] He slew Rāvaṇa in order to save the world from *adharma.*[80] "Out of His incomparable song to all those who seek liberation He has revealed Himself in the temple at Śrī Raṅgam".[81] This is the *arcā* form of the Lord which is regarded by the Āḷvārs as a result of the grace of God who condescends to descend even in an icon for the sake of his devotees. This is a view already found in the *Pāñcarātra.*

The Āḷvār does not even want the Indraloka, but prefers to address the Lord for ever on this earth.[82] He wants to serve the Lord endlessly. He thinks that he has not served the Lord properly enough. He says that his purpose of being born

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is futile as he has not spent all his time offering flowers at the feet of the Lord, nor is he always speaking faultless words describing His qualities.[83] He remembers that even monkeys and squirrels helped the Lord when he was crossing the sea to reach Laṅkā and he feels the necessity of doing his bit too:[84]

He surrenders himself completely to God. *Kārpaṇya* is seen in the lines "In my mind there is no purity. In my mouth no words of affection have I..... O master who have me as Thine slave. Tell me what way is open to me."[85]

He has written a whole composition *Tiruppalliyeḻucci*, which is a prayer for awakening the Lord from his sleep. He is so smitten by the love of God that he waits ardently for the day so that he can serve his Lord. On the other hand, he expresses an ecstatic rapture "on beholding His lovely red lips and eyes, cool tears of delight flowing copiously from mine eyes have, alas, prevented me from enjoying more of Him! unblessed me! What shall I do?"[86]

The importance of the Lord's name is emphasized. Even sinners are freed from their sins by taking His name.[87] Hell became Heaven when the name of God was uttered there by Yama and Mudgala.[88] He prays to the Lord to take away the food of those who do not take His name and give it to the dogs.[89]

Kūlaśekhara

Kūlaśekhara is said to have been the ruler of Travancore. His works are known as *Perumāl Tirumoḻi* and *Mukundamālā*. In the former the progress of the soul towards the divine can be seen, the latter is often compared to the "*Gīta Govinda*". The *Tirumoli* consists of 105 hymns and is divided into ten sections.[90] The first group of ten verses shows his eagerness to achieve the *parā bhakti* and a few lines may be quoted to illustrate their passion and ecstasy.

> "When will the time come when my tears of ecstasy shall flow on seeing the wonderful Lord? When will that time come when my mind gazing at His moon-like face will melt into Him? ..... Moving with His devotees with unabating love of Him, singing His excellent names propelled by love with intense emotion, thinking of Him with tear-dropped ecstasy falling like rain, melting throughout the day.... When shall I roll on the floor dancing with ecstasy? When is that day to come when standing before Him with the devotees I too can become as one of them?"[91]

In the second group of ten verses in the *Perumāl Tirumoḻi* Kūlaśekhara follows the technique of *śaraṇāgati* formulated in the *Pāñcarātra āgamas*. All the six ways are mentioned. *Anukūlasya saṅkalpa* is seen when he desires the company of other devotees. They "dancing from place to place, sing and move about. They have become mad with devotion to my Lord Raṅganātha. To the greatness of those devotees has my mind become attached".[92]

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The third decad of hymns of *Tirumoḻi* shows *pratikūlasya vivarjanaṁ*. He says that he will not join those who love their bodies, and always seek low pleasures. "Others who seek transient pleasures are to me mad. To them I am mad".[93] In the fourth decad he says that the grace of god is to be sought and surrender made to Him, showing the fourth and fifth condition of self surrender.

He constantly seeks the company of God and prays to be in the temple at Tirumālai, does not care for pomp and splendour of Indra's court but wants to become a fish in the streams of Tirumālai hills..."[94].

He fancies all sorts of relationships with the Lord—mother-child, child-mother beloved-lover, father-child, etc. and prays for His grace—

"If thou will not my portioned grief dispel
I have no hope but Thee
Vitruvakodu's Lord
Girt with its grooves of flowers with fragrant smell

I'm like a babe, which weeps yet thinks of the mother's grace. Though she with anger fierce has thrust it from her face".[95]

In the sixth decad he takes up the attitude of a maiden waiting for the arrival of her husband. "The place of enjoyment, should it not be in solitude? and the tryst should be kept in the sandy dunes? Yet thou hast not come".[96] This reflects the sentiment of *nāyaka* and *nāyikā*. He also fancies himself as the mother of Kṛṣṇa-Devakī—and introduces the pathetic sentiment in the seventh decad. Devakī pines away for the love of Kṛṣṇa. In the eighth decad he imagines himself as Kauśalyā, the fortunate mother, who saw her child's childhood. In the ninth decad he becomes Daśaratha and pines for Śri Rāma and shows profound pathos and love. The full intensity of love is thus seen in terms of varied relationships The last decad reaches the climax. The knots of bondage are broken which separate him from the Lord.

Mukundamālā is considered to be the necklace of the Vaiṣṇavas. Its beauty can be seen from a *śloka* taken from it as an example—

"*Jayatu jayatu devo Devakīnandano ayaṁ*
Jayatu jayatu kṛṣṇo Vṛṣṇi-Vaṁśa-pradīpaḥ
Jayatu jayatu Pṛthvībhāranāśo mukundaḥ
Mukundā! mūrdhna praṇipatya yāce
Bhavantamekāntamiyantamarthaṁ
Avismṛtistvaccaraṇāravinde
Bhave bhave mestu bhavatprasādaḥ"

Saṭhakopa (Nammālvāral)

He is easily the greatest of the Āḻvārs and is held in such high esteem by the Vaiṣṇavas that he has become a symbol of the whole gamut of Divine experience and was apotheosized. Later, his icon was placed in every temple. He has

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written four works—*Tiruviruttam*, *Tiruvāśarīyam*, *Tiruvāyamoli* and *Periya Tiruvandādi*. It is said that they correspond to the four vedas. *Tiruvāyamoli* has been called *Dramidopaniṣad* by the great Vedāntadeśika.[97]

Tiruviruttam is a poem of 100 four-line stanzas[98] in which the Āḷvār expresses the longing of his soul for union with God under the figure of the love of a maid for a man. The note of *Tiruviruttam* is one of "almost unrelieved yearning for God where the devotee pines away for the Lord who does not come for a very long time. Hoper comments that Kṛṣṇa justifies this behaviour in words which may be taken as a commentary on this poem "I do not attach myself to those who are devoted to me, in order to make their devotion for me more intense",[99] and again, "In order to intensify your affection for me I disappear forsaking you who have for my sake renounced your sense of right and wrong, your relatives and your duty". With this utterance to the *gopīs* one could compare the more drastic one to Nārada—"I take away all that is his".[100]

The first few verses of *Tiruviruttam* show the devotee's fascination by the Divine beauty, description of the love—smitten soul, soul addressing the mind to follow the Lord and to be in His glorious company. There is a deep symbolism in the poem. For example, the Mother in the poem stands for the devotee's own state of mental composure, or friends who keep their mental composure, the Bride is the paroxysm of love for God, the bridegroom is God Himself.[101]

From the fifth verse this symbolism may be clearly seen. The northern winds are up and the soul is tossed between the devotion to God and the world. But yet the passion for God is beginning to be established more firmly. The devotee is seen to be pining for the grace of God.

The foster mother says—

"When the black clouds rank on rank thus rise
Challenging 'who of maids will keep her 'pure?
Her Lord, the swift bird's rider called her not
Nor Tulasī gave! my girl with her few words
The village tongues now rend! oh comfort her:"[102]

The friend speaks of the Lord's callousness—

.....as his cruelties who once destroyed Laṅkā's crowded halls.[103] The soul is highly fascinated by the beauty of the Lord and has high sensitivity about the presence of God and His grace—

"Like pools of soft-stemmed lotus, as they lie
A-bloom on one side bent by blasts, they shine
—My Lord's great eyes—on me, who at the sky
Gazing, bow at His feet, who seems to say
'For my stride, earth and heaven do not suffice'."[104]

Whenever there occurs a slight response, the joy is intense—what in this world will not Tulasī do ?[105] Though the soul has an ecstatic feeling in the above verse,

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it wants more the vision of God Himself. She sends various messengers, swans, clouds etc. to God and at last the arrival of the Lord is intimated.

"A cool south wind has come and secretly,
With honey sweet of Tulasī's fair bloom
Rain-like caressed my limbs and ornaments"[106]

The devotee gives great importance to *japa*. It is her only consolation.

"In Vedic hymns earth's Gods give worship due
To the sacred feet of Him who strode the world
So I with untamed passion and in grief
At deeds and self, repeat His sacred name,
Like one who lacking ripe eats fruits unripe."[107]

Gradually, the Āḷvār feels that no longer is he moving himself to God, but that God is modifying him to suit His love. The true evolution of the soul towards godliness is seen here. When this is perfected the union is attained. He sees God everywhere.

"There is naught but grief for those who have looked and looked.
At dawn and sunset, age succeeding age—
But can sleep ever come to those who gaze
Joyful with mighty passion rare, at Mal
Eternal, whom adoring gods surround."[108]

In its sustained drama of longing and pining, passion and ecstacy the poem remains one of the earliest and greatest of the poems of mystical love. The *madhura bhāva* of Godā is perfected here. In fact, Godā and Nammāḷvār may be compared to Mīrā and Caitanya.

Tiruvāśariyam itself means an "observance with due rites or forms of worship" of the Divine. This is called *caryā* or *kriyā*. In its seven hymns it instructs in the *tattva* (nature), the *hita* (the Good) and the *puruṣārtha* (the goal).

The opening hymn describes God in all His splendour and glory "Like the lustrous, emerald green mountain with huge red clouds, crimson sun, cool moon, adorned and wearing many stars with coral red reefs asleep on the palm of the ocean Lord, Lord, Thou art wrapt in yellow robe, adorned with crown and necklace..... O thou lotus-navelled one : Supreme Godhead."[109] In the third hymn the Āḷvār expresses his desire to become the servant of the devotees of Lord— "To that supreme God's devotion we shall become servants, here after creation after creation."[110] The fourth hymn speaks of refuge at the feet of God "Will it not come to pass that creation after creation unceasingly disturbed we shall seek refuge at the feet of the primal Divine wonderful being."[111] The seventh hymn makes the determination to worship only the supreme God and not the lesser gods. "It is He who is resting on the banyan leaf, Him our Lord, the great God of māyā alone, and no

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other God shall we adore."[112] This spells out the statement in the *Bhagavadgītā* — "*antavattu phalaṁ teṣāṁ*".

Periya Tiruvandādi consists of 87 verses. Its purpose is to instruct the mind to worship the greatness of God.[113] He is described as the father, mother and teacher.[114] The Divine has been described as the most desirable and His experience as unique.[115] *Jīvanmukti* is possible here "But who can trouble me who has the Lord of all, the auspicious ocean of excellent qualities, within my heart."[116]

By contemplating on Him, an abiding ecstasy of calm possesses one's mind. His look removes all sins and makes the Āḷvār see Him.

Tiruvāymoḷi is the greatest work of Nammālvār and has acclaimed by Vedāntadeśika as 'Tamil Veda' *Dramidopaniṣad*. It consists of 1102 stanzas. It has been described as the 'universal compendium' (*saṁhitā sārvabhaumī*) of the essence of vedic and Puranic lore. The first twenty verses have been held to summarize the *Ṛgveda*, the next thousand the *Sāmaveda*, the next hundred the *Yajurveda* and the final one (in eight parts) the *Atharvaveda* supposed to be concened with the eight *rasas*. The first hundred verses speak of the Lord's service as the means of liberation. The next hundred speak of the Lord as enjoyed by the liberated. The third hundred mention the Lord both as End as well as Means (*Prāpyatopāyabhavau*). The fourth hundred declared Him as not attainable through anything else (*ananyaprāpya*) and the same is elaborated by the rest. The one central subject of the thousand verses, is that the divine Lord of Śrī is Himself the means for His own attainment (*svasiddhaḥ karaṇaṁ*).

God is called the abode of bliss,[117] the inner Lord and pervader of all. [118] In the second ten verses the path of surrender is described. "Give up all things with their attachments. Giving up thus surrender to the Lord who liberates". The mystic realization that God loves the soul as much as the soul craves for union with Him is seen in this verse—"In my mind I have not thought of keeping Him out of my mind. He himself out of love conquered my mind, wilful though it is, and has entered into me residing within my body and has inseparably united with it. Such a person, will He bear to be apart from me?"[119] In the first decad of the second hundred stanzas, the Āḷvār describes the pangs of separation from the Lord. He goes on to narrate the *Līlās* of the Lord and then the indescribable delight of nearness to Him.[120] The next decad sings of the Lord as saviour as Nṛsimha etc. In the fifth decad the poet follows the way of the *gopis*. The seventh decad describes the twelve names of the Lord. The third hundred speaks of the beauty, blissfulness and redemptive quality of the Lord. The fourth century establishes the sole desirability of the Lord. In the fifth century, again, God is described as the remover of sins, protector of His devotees and the sole source of Good. In the sixth God is called easily approachable as *śāraṅga*.[121] In the seventh God is particularly praised as destroying evil and sins. In the eighth the dāsya of the devotee leads to the captivation of the Lord. In the ninth the Lord is said to ever await the time when He would save the

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devotee. In the tenth century the Lord is described as leading His devotees to His own abode through the path of light" (*arcirādi*).

Nammāḻvār had begun in his *Tiruviruttam* by describing the unendurable misery of *saṁsāra* and ended in *Tiruvāymoli* by expressing as a prolonged spiritual meditation his own progress in the experience of the Divine.[122]

Madhura Kavi

He was the disciple of Nammālvār. His composition is named "*Kaṇṇinum Śiruttāmbu*".[123] The utmost *guru-bhakti* is seen in it. He adored his guru as God incarnate. He says that he understood the inner meaning of the Vedas from his guru and had become a realized soul by having sought refuge with love in his guru. It has to be remembered that, although the importance of the teacher is an ancient tradition, it came to be one of the most striking features of medieval Indian mysticism.

South Indian Śaivite Saints

The tradition of Śiva-bhakti is very old in the south. The praise of Śiva is sung in the works which belong to as early as the 2nd century B.C., e.g., in the *Tolkāppiyam* (2nd century B.C.), the 'eight anthologies' (2nd century B.C.) and the earliest Tamil epics. Though in all these the word 'Śiva' is not found yet, all the other epithets which are attributed to Him are found. The earliest Tamil epics call him Maṇimekalai. Śiva, as a personal being, transcendent and immanent, gracious, granting deliverance, the idea of clinging to His feet—all these ideas are found in an early work *Tirukkural* by Tiruvalluvar. Hence, south India had become associated with bhakti cult and monotheism very early in history. The Śaivite *āgamas* also showing the doctrine of Paśu, Pati and Pāśa, stressing on *jñāna yoga*, *kriyā* and *caryā*, speaking of *mukti* in four ways, were important steps in the development of Śaivite bhakti. But the Tamil Śaivite bhakti became wide spread throughout the Tamil land by the Śaivite[124] mystics or *Nāyanmārs*. Sometimes they formed various parties under the leadership of one saint and traversed the entire country singing, dancing and debating. The movement reached its speak in the seventh century and had not spent itself entirely by the middle of the ninth century.[125]

Tradition speaks of sixty three *Nāyanārs*, whose lives are described in the *Periya Purāṇam*. Their main contribution lay in the creation of a firm foundation for the system of Tamil mysticism and philosophy. They made no distiction of caste, creed or sex in the cause of devotion. The two works of Nambiandar Nambi, namely, *Dēvāram* or *Tēvāram* and *Tirumurai* comprise the whole of the teachings of the group of Nāyanārs. The Nāyanārs have mainly based their doctrine on the teachings of the *āgamas*. They have introduced in their works the system of thirty-six *tattvas*, the dual doctrine of Śiva-Śakti, *caryā*, *jñāna*, *arcā*, and *yoga* system of *kuṇḍalinī*, and the mythology. But their best contribution is their mysticism. Their mysticism like

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that of the Āḷvārs is different from the non-dualistic mystices of Kashmir Śaivism and can be called theistic mysticism. Their object of realization is a God of love. Their end is the union of the soul with God without losing its identity and the means to this end is bhakti. In contrast Advaitic mysticism must stress the role of jñāna, since for it saṁsāra is the result of ignorance which must be cured by knowledge. In dualistic theism God must by this grace really remove a film of limitation from the individual soul and thus endow it with the capacity of spiritual life and love.

Perfect bhakti in the Siddhantis is not merely the means of salvation but the essence of salvation. Grace plays a prominent role in their doctrine. God exists within the form of knowledge (jñāna) and grace (*arul citti*). United with God through grace, the self becomes the conscious possessor of Divine wisdom and grace and attains salvation.

The Śaiva saints of the south, called *Nāyanārs*, are held to have generally flourished during the Pallava age[126] and their relationship to śaiva *āgamas* is somewhat similar to that of the Āḷvārs to the *Pāñcarātra āgamas*. Tirumulār, who was earlier than Sundarmūrti, refers to the *āgamas* as equally divine with the vedas in his *Tirumandiram*. The Pallava ruler Rājasimha has been called '*Śaiva-siddhānta-mārga kṣata-sakala-malaḥ*' and *āgamānusarī*.[127] The *Brahma-sūtra* refers to āgamic doctrines.[128] The *Pāśupata-sūtras* and the *Pāñcarātra bhāṣya* of Kauṇḍinya are of uncertain date but could belong to the Gupta period.[129] Although the relationship of the Nakulīśa-Pāśupata sect with the Śaivas of the southern *āgamas* is not clear—*Sarvadarśana-sangraha* clearly distinguishes them—the general principles of the two are at least similar if not largely identical. From all this it would seem that the tradition of the Śaiva *āgama* in the south should go back to a period antedating the Pallavas and it is this tradition which supplied the *Nāyanars* with the basic presuppositions of their devotional hymns.

Of the traditionally twenty-eight *āgamas*, *Kāmika* with its summary as *Mṛgendra* was called the chief text.[130] The present text of *Mṛgendra*, however, has been declared late as suggested by its critique of Sānkhya, Vedānta, Jaina and Vaiśeṣika systems.[131] This, however, is somewhat gratuitous since none of these doctrines can be held to have been late. It is, in fact, a mistake to date all advaita doctrines as posterior to Śankara.[132]

Mṛgendra declare that the Lord to have revealed the great tantra containing three *padārthas* and four parts (*pādas*).[133] The three *padārthas* are *Pati*, *paśu* and *Pāśa*.[134] *Pati* or Śiva is the creator of the universe and the saviour of the soul. This doctrine limits the causality of God to being a *nimitta-kāraṇa* and is thus similar to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣik doctrine.[135] *Paśu* or soul is a distinct but eternal, individuated consciousness having the powers of cognition and activity.[136] *Pāśa* is ultimately rooted in *mala*[137] which binds the soul to ignorance, passions and suffering. Since *mala* is a substance it cannot totally disappear without the action of God's grace. When the soul reaches a state of equanimity between good and

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evil, it has what is called the 'maturity of *mala mala*' (*mala-pāka*). The condition of *karma-sāmya* and *mala-pāka* are simultaneous with the descent of grace (*śaktipāta*). The Lord does not take any incarnations or avatāra but He may be said to have an 'energy-body' (*śāktam-śarīram*)[138] with Five Faces. These really refer to mantras and putative forms for the sake of contemplation.[139] As a creator the Lord acts directly in the Pure Realms and indirectly in the Impure Realms. This doctrine is similar to that of the *Pāñcarātra āgamas.*

The Pāśsa are *mala, āṇava* or *rodhaśakti, karma, māyā* along with *kāla* etc. The four *pādas* are *vidyā*, yoga, *kriyā* and *caryā. Caryā* refers to external worship of images, temples, prayers, songs, etc. and in it the devotee acts as *dāsa* and reaches *sālokya; kriyā* relates to various inner rituals of worship concentrating on mantra. The devotee here attains the status of a satputra and reaches *sāmīpya.* At the level of yoga or contemplation he becomes like a companion (*sakhya*) and reaches *sārūpya.* Finally, in *vidyā* or knowledge he attains union (*sāyujya*).[140] These methods are really the same as *śāmbhava, śākta* and *āṇava upāyas.*

It is the glory of the *Nāyanārs* to have practically illustrated *anupāya*, thus adumbrating the doctrine of *prapatti* within the Śaiva tradition. This dimension was not one of theoretical formulation but of a new feeling or experience in practical religious life, the experience of dependence on God, longing for Him and the ecstasy of love for Him. Sekkilar in the *Periya Purāṇaṁ* gives the traditional lives of the sixty-three *Nāyanārs* who were not only *bhaktas* like the *Āḷvārs* but also occasionally showed a keen polemical spirit.[141]

The traditonally sixty-three *Nāyanārs*[142] included a woman, Kāraikkāl Ammaiyār who flourished about the middle of the sixth century A.D.[143] The love of God absorbed her whole life. Her vision of God was in the form of bright light or rather the revelation of God Himself as light to the soul that intensely loves Him. Gnanasambandar, Appar and Sundarmūrti were the greatest of the *Nāyanārs.*

Sambandar, according to P. Sundaram Pillai, lived in the early years of the seventh century A.D.[144] His poetic composition are collectively called *Paṇṇiru Tirumuṛai.* In his childhood he is said to have drunk the knowledge of wisdom from Pārvatī herself. Later, he vanquished the Jainas in debate and converted them to Śaivism. He believed that the love of God is that of a mother, father, master and spouse and the mystical insight is a gift of His grace. Bhakti is not only emotional attachment to God but includes a certain degree of knowledge of God and involves a surrender of the whole person to God. Those who possess true love are ever subject to the feet of the Lord—"*paccamutai aṭikaḷ pātam paṇivār*".[145]

Profound humility is found in his hymns. Sambandar asserts that he will wash the feet of the Lord in the morning amidst the wear and tear of life and in spite of clinging desire of karma.[146] The state of union is expressed in terms of conjugal love. Bhakta is compared to a love-sick woman—God "thief for stealing the heart".

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Appar was also called Tirunāvukkarasu. Born in a village Tiruvamur, he was a Vellala by caste. At first, he was Jaina but, by his sister's influence, was converted to Śaivism. Dikshitar[147] opines that he must have flourished in the first half of the seventh century A.D., since he was a contemporary of Guṇabhāva also known as Mahendravarman I (A.D. 600-630). A.P. Karmarkar[148] also agrees with this view. K.S. Srinivasa Pillai says that Appar's conversion to Śaivism must have taken place before A.D. 613-14.[149] Ramaswami Sastri opines that Appar must have belonged to the latest part of the sixth century A.D., and continued to the seventh century. Most of the scholars agree with Dikshitar now.

Appar conceives a personal relationship with God—who is mother, father and relative for him. Every perfection in man and nature is a sign of God's love for man. Appar had a profound sense of sin and hence his bhakti is marked by penitence and repentance. Together with a sense of sin a profound humility and self abasement can be seen. But in spite of all this he is optimistic about salvation through Divine Grace. Bhakti is fostered by continuous remembrance and meditation on Him. The mystic state consists of everlasting union between God and his lover. Love between God and devotee is expressed in terms of man and woman, bride-groom and bride.

Sundarār was born to Brāhmaṇa parents at Tirunnavalur. There is a myth about him that God Śiva himself prevented his marriage in the guise of an old man declaring Sundarār as his bond slave. C.V.N. Ayyar holds that Sundarār must be placed in about the last quarter of the eighth century A.D.[150] Srinivasa Pillai says that Sundarār died in A.D. 825, which is recorded to be the last year of Chera King Sirman Pirumal Nayaar.[151] Raghava Aiyangar opines that Sundarār should be placed in the first quarter of the eighth century. V.S. Ramaswamy Śāstri places him in the beginning of the ninth century A.D. According to Dikshitar he must have lived in the latter half of the eighth century and the first quarter of the ninth century A.D. Dikshitar quotes the assertion of J. Dubreul that the Pāṇḍyan King Varaguṇa (contemporary of Sundarār) led an invasion against Pallava King Dantivarman (beginning from A.D. 775).[152] Karmarkar[153] also supports this view.

Sundarār composed many hymns which are included in the seventh book of the *Tirumurai*. In these God is conceived to be madly in love with His devotees. Bhakti is considered to be the gift of God. Single-minded love is stressed much by him. The Lord is addressed by such epithets as sugar-cane, honey, etc. Deeper bhakti involves a reciprocal possession between God and His devotee.

Tirumular was the famous author of *Tirumantiram*. The myth about him makes him a permanent door-keeper of Śiva. Once while on his journey to meet the sage Agastya he saw cattle bemoaning over the death of cowherd Mūla. Tirumular entered the body of Mūla and drove the cattle home. When he reached home he did not even touch or talk to Mūla's wife. Later everyone knew that he was a great yogī[154]

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V.V. Ramana Śāstri places Tirumular before the ninth century as Tirumular's name is included among the names of the *Tondar* in *Sundaran Tiruttondattogai*. He says that since there is a great similarity between Tirumular's teachings and *Pratya-bhijñā darśana* he must have come to the south roughly in the sixth century A.D.[155] But Karmarkar says that this date does not seem to be correct. He says that Kashmir Śaivism flourished in about the ninth century A.D. It is possible that Tirumular also flourished immediately after this.[156]

Maria Susai Dhavamony[157] says that *Tirumandiram* is probably the first Tamil text in which *patti* and *anpu* are frequently used to convey not merely the ordinary meaning of 'love of God' but deeper, that of mystical union with God. God is love, His very essence is love.

"The ignorant think that love (*anpu*) and God (*śivam*) are two different things:
they do not know that love is God.

"After knowing that love is God
They remain possessed by love which is God" (257).[158]

When the devotee sings for God as does a calf for its mother, God seeking him enters him (2581).[159] God is accessible only to those whose heart melts in love—

"Praise the Lord, melting in love
Seek the Primal Being melting in love

Then the great Nandi (Śiva) in order to bestow the love of union will grant the gift of loving Him alone. (261)."[160]

Anpotu urukal means melting in love. The nature of love is further explained as concentration and meditation and His praise. There is no opposition between bhakti and jñāna. Bhakti is called the state of final liberation and this state is described vividly. The bhakta weeps, wails and praises God—his very bones melting in love for Him. "Born in love, brought up in love, moving and resting in love, fed with the ambrosia of love, the Nandi entered me as love (1769)".[161]

Māṇikkavāṣagar was born at Tirunaduvar and was brāhmana by caste. He also acted as a minister to King Arinartanam of Madura. Dikshitar[162] proposes ninth century A.D., for him. Farquhar also agrees with this. Frazer places him between A.D. 800-900 Pillai[163] opines that he lived after the period of Tīvāram Trio. But Nilakanta Sastri says that he must have preceded the Tivaram Trio as the Varaguṇa mentioned by the saint is not one of the two Varaguṇas available to history but the Varaguṇa of legend about whom we know nothing.[164]

Mystical writings reached their climax in Māṇikkavāsagar's hymns. His work is known as *Tiruvāṣagam*; another work *Tiruccirrambalok kovai* is also ascribed to him. The latter shows different stages in the love of a young couple. It has a great esoteric significance and shows the love of individual soul and the absolute. *Tiruvāṣagam* is a more outspoken expression of confession and of devotion. Dr. Tope has sought to trace the influence of the *Gita* on it throughout. [165].

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He lays great stress on the Divine immanence. 'He is the Lord who has taken possession over me, the mother of the universe who penetrates the seven worlds and the Lord who rules them all. 'He is the life of all that lives and yet not confused with any of them. Entire dependence of the creatures on God ("*Vitilo ketuvēn*") should be the aim. He calls God the source of his life (*En vāl mutalē*), and says "Lest I should go astray, he laid his hand on me. God's whole activity is motivated by love which is in the form of mercy and grace.[166]

The devotee says 'Grant me the grace of melting in ceaseless love for you (5.11— "*Itaiyarāv aṇpuṇakkennūtakatte ninrurukat tantarul*"). Though grace is a free gift, yet Māṇikkavāṣagar thinks that it is better if it is obtained after man's longing for it. Intense longing is not only an emotional feeling but love penetrated by knowledge which is a means to liberation. 'I am pierced with real, never intermittent, love just as a wedge is pierced into a soft young tree". (4.63).[167] Bhakti also includes the realization of his own unworthiness and a profound sense of sin. Liberation is not the merger into an attributeless absolute but a perfect union with a personal God. He conceives of the mystic union in terms of marital love. In this state all worldly desires die out, empirical language and actions cease, the ego sense vanishes. 'I am not my own. Your servant am I. I can live no moment severed from you' (44.2).[168]

Bhakti, though it is a means of salvation, yet in its most perfect form it is the essence of salvation itself. He has criticized Śankara on his ideas of liberation as complete merger in the attributeless absolute.[169]

Āḷvārs and Nāyanārs

A comparison of the hymns of the *Āḷvārs* and the *Nāyanārs* will show the same general character of their bhakti, i.e., of dispassion in relation to the world and intense longing for personal union with God, the sense of despair and ecstasy and the imputation of a personal relationship between the devotee and the Lord. Bhakti is the whole gamut of love from despair to ecstasy. The general metaphysical assumption of this individual soul as lying midway between the world and God seeking to move from the world to God, of a pure spiritual world indwelt by divine persons and pure souls providing an everlasting basis for a blessed life, and of a God who is the Supreme Soul creating and governing the universe determining the destiny of souls in accordance with their deeds and yet conferring grace on them by its own miraculous and mysterious power—these are common assumptions of the *Āḷvārs* and *Nāyanāras* as indeed they are in *Pāñcarātras* and the dualistic, 'Saiva *āgamas*'. In both, Sāmkhyan categories and evolutionism have been joined to the theistic notion of creation as well as the idea of some kind of emanation, i.e. of a pure process of angelic generation. One marked difference, however, is in relation to the concept of incarnation. In the Vaiṣṇava saints, God is more recognizably human or historical, or, if one pleases, legendary. There is a richer and better scenario for the Lord's *Līlā* and the possibility of a greater synthesis

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with the matters and events of ordinary life. There is also a noticeable difference with respects to the modes and contentions of worship current among the Vaiṣṇavas and the Śaivas. While these differences are attributable to differences of traditional myths and ritual and the doctrinal similarities to the common philosophical assumptions of theism, the similarity of the deeper character of spiritual experience, i.e. of *sādhya bhakti*, leads to reveal that religious experience moves towards a common source as it moves up towards God.

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1. Hooper, *Hymns of the Āḷvārs*, p. 6.
2. S.K. Aiyangar, *Sri Rāmānujacārya*, pp. 187-88.
3. Hooper, op. cit., p. 11; Raychowdhuri, *Early History of the Vaisnava Sect*, pp. 187-88.
4. D.C. Sircar, *Studies in the Religious Life of Ancient and Medieval India*, pp. 55-57.
5. Nilakanta Sastri, *A History of South India*, p. 426.
6. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, vol. II, pp. 227-32.
7. Maria Susai Dhavamony, *Love of God according to Saiva Siddhanta, a study in mysticism and theology of Saivism*, p. 373.
8. K.C. Varadachari, *Āḷvārs of South India*, p. xii.
9. He had taken a vow to remain a bachelor and serve God, but was so lured by a woman that he forgot his service to the Lord. When the woman seized all his property and turned him out, God himself came in the guise of a servant from Vipranārāyaṇa to the woman (Devadevi) with a golden cup. The cup belonged to the temple and Vipranārāyaṇa was charged with theft. But then the Lord appeared in the dream of the chieftain and explained to him what He had done and asked him to relieve Vipranārāyaṇa and Devadevi. When they were released they saw the grace and condescensions of the Lord and turned a new leaf, K.C. Varadachari, op. cit. pp. 82ff.
10. Varadachari, op. cit., p. 12.
11. ibid., p. 13.
12. *Peyāḷvār*, vs. 37, Quoted from Varadachari, op. cit. p. 26.
13. "*Īśāvāsya ... tena tyaktena bhuñjīthāḥ*", *Īsopaniṣad*, I, 1.
14. For the myths see, A. Govindacharya, *The Holy Lives of the Azhbars or the Dravida Saints*.
15. Varadachari, op. cit., pp. 1-2.
16. *Mudal Tiruvandādi* I—Hooper's *Hymns of the Āḷvārs*, p. 120 fn., Varadachari, op. cit., p. 8.
17. *Mudal Tiruvandādi*, vs. 8; Varadachari, op. cit., p. 9.
18. ibid., vs. 22. p. 11.
19. Varadachari, op. cit., vs. 73. p. 10.
20. "*Avyaktā hi gatirduḥkham...*", *Gītā*, XII. 5.
21. Varadachari, op. cit., p. 17. Curiously, Tulsīdās, the great Hindi mystic, uses a similar metaphor of the lamp for *jñāna* as distinguished from bhakti. cf. *Rāmacaritamānasa*, Uttara-kāṇḍa.

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22. Varadachari, op. cit., vs. 5, p. 18.
23. ibid., vs. 9, 28, 49, p. 18.
24. ibid., vs. 31, p. 18.
25. ibid., vs. 18, 47, p. 18.
26. "I saw the form of Kṛṣṇa in my dream, thus I saw the flaming discus in His hand which abolishes good and evil alike. I enjoy the strength of the Lord who gets rid of the tendencies which cause sorrow that returns again and again (vs. 18); In his wakeful state—"By day time I saw him; I saw the all-pervading Lord, even more clearly than in dream did I see Him. (vs. 81)"; Quoted from Varadachari, op. cit., pp. 18-19.
27. ibid.,vs. 20, p. 19.
28. ibid., p. 21.
29. ibid., vs. 38, p. 25.
30. ibid., vs. 32, p. 26.
31. ibid., vs. 9, p. 26.
32. ibid., vs. 2-3, p. 24.
33. Varadachari, op. cit., vs. 94, p. 23.
34. Ibid.,vs. 4, 5, 9, 18, 47, p. 25.
35. Nilakanta Sastri, *History of South India*, p. 426.
36. *Supra*, p. 244.
37. *Nānmukhan Tiruvandādi*, vs. 3, Quoted from Varadachari. op. cit., p. 34.
38. ibid., vs. 1, p. 32.
39. ibid., vs. 2, p. 33.
40. ibid., vs. 5, p. 35.
41. *Tirucchanda Viruttam*, vs. 79; Quoted from Varadachari, op. cit., p. 58.
42. *Nānmukhan Tiruvandādi*, vs. 24, Quoted from Varadachari, op. cit., p. 37.
43. *Tirucchanda Viruttam*, vs. 17; Quoted from Varadachari, op. cit., p. 55.
44. *Nānmukhan Tiruvandādi*, vs. 83; Quoted from Varadachari, op. cit., p. 43.
45. ibid., vs. 60; p. 45.
46. ibid., vs. 40; p. 41.
47. *Tirucchanda Viruttam*, vs. 77; Quoted from Varadachari, op. cit., fn. p. 50.
48. Varadachari, op. cit., p. 50.
49. *Nānmukhan Tiruvandādi* vs. 41; Quoted from Varadachari, op. cit., p. 42.
50. Cf. Rangachari, Vedāntadeśika's *Dramidopaniṣad*, p. xvii; Raychowdhuri, *Early History of the Vaiṣṇava, Sect*, pp. 186-87.
51. Nilakanta Sastri, places him after Tirumaliśai, op. cit., p. 426.
52. D.C. Sircar, *Studies in the Religious Life in Ancient and Medieval India*, p. 57; Raychowdhuri, op. cit., p. 187.
53. Nilakanta Sastri, *Development of Religions in South India*, Ch. III, p. 46.
54. Hooper, op. cit., pp. 38-44; Varadachari, op. cit., pp. 110-20.
55. Hooper, op cit., pp. 37-38.
56. ibid., p. 35.
57. ibid., p. 36.

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58. *Gītā*, III, 13.
59. It has been translated into English by Hooper in *The Hymn of the Āḷvārs*, pp. 50-58.
60. Varadachari, op. cit., p. 132.
61. Prof. Seshadri says that the very setting and background of *Tirupāvāi* is rich in symbolism. Its auspiciousness consists in the ascendancy of *sattva guṇa* over others. It is a song of dawn in both the literal and the symbolic sense. It breaths throughout a spirit of freshness and purity of the dawn. Indication of the dawn symbolizes the rise of sattva in human nature. Purity of 'sattva' is a precondition for *bhagvad anubhava.*

    The highest *puruṣārtha* set forth in the *Tiruppāvāi* is the asking of privilege of eternal service at His feet. 'Pāvai' is the supreme *puruṣārtha* of dedicated service. See Prof. K. Seshadri, "Religious Symbolism in Āṇḍāl's Tiruppāvāi", *All India Oriental Conference*, 18th Session, 1955, Annamalainagar.
62. Varadahari, op. cit., p. 135.
63. "*Bhoktuṁ tava priyatamaṁ bhavatīva Gode*
    Bhaktim nijām praṇaya-bhāvanayā gṛnantaḥ
    Uccāvacair-viruha sanganajaimdantaiḥ
    Śṛṅgārayanti hṛdayam guravastvadīvaḥ"; *Godāstuti*, verse 8.
64. Nilakanta Sastri, *History of South India*, p. 371.
65. All the verses of Tiruppāṇ are translated by Varadachari. cf. Varadachari, op. cit., pp. 106-08.
66. ibid., vs. 1, p. 106.
67. ibid., vs. 2, p. 106.
68. ibid., vs. 4, p. 107.
69. ibid., vs. 5.
70. ibid., vs. 6.
71. ibid., vs. 7.
72. ibid., vs. 8, p. 108.
73. ibid., vs. 9.
74. ibid., pp. 86-99.
75. ibid., pp. 104-04,
76. *Tirumalai*, vs. 1; Quoted from Varadachri, op. cit., p. 86.
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78. ibid., vs. 4, p. 87.
79. ibid., vs. 9, p. 89.
80. ibid., vs. 11.
81. ibid., vs. 10.
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83. ibid., vs. 26, p. 94.
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85. ibid., vs. 30, p. 95.
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87. *Tirumalai.*, vs. 4, p. 87.
88. ibid., vs. 12, p. 90.
89. ibid., vs. 14, p. 90.
90. Varadachari, op. cit., pp. 64ff.
91. *Perumāl Tirumoḷi*, I, Vs. 1-10; Quoted from Varadachari, op. cit., pp. 65-66.
92. ibid., II, vs. 8, p. 67.
93. ibid., III, vs. 8, p. 68.
94. ibid., IV, vs. 1, 2, 5, 10, p.70.
95. ibid., V, vs. 1-5; pp.71-72.
96. ibid., VI, vs. 1, p.73.
97. Cf. "*Śaṭhajid Upaniṣad-dugdhasinghum*", *Dramidopaniṣad*, p.4, verse 2.
98. Translated by Hooper, op. cit., pp.60-88.
99. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, X, ch. 32.
100. Hooper, op. cit., p. 60-88.
101. ibid., p. 60.
102. *Tiruviruttam*, vs. 19; Quoted from Hooper, op. cit., p.66.
103. ibid., vs. 36; Quoted from Varadachari, op. cit., p.155.
104. ibid.. vs. 42; Quoted from Hooper, op. cit., p.73.
105. ibia., vs. 25; Quoted from Vardachari, op. cit., p.153.
106. ibid., vs. 56; Quoted from Ṿaradachari, op. cit., pp.155-56.
107. ibid., vs. 64; Quoted from Hooper, op. cit., p.79.
108. ibid., vs. 97; Quoted from Varadachari, op. cit., p.160.
109. Varadachari, op. cit., p.165.
110. ibid., p.166.
111. ibid., p.167.
112. ibid., p.171.
113. ibid., pp.172-174; cf. "My mind has become Thy slave, Divine Lord"; *Periya Tiruvandādi*, vs. 4; Quoted from Varadachari, op. cit., p.174.
114. *Periya Tiruvandādi*, vs. 5; Quoted from Varadachari, op. cit., p.174.
115. ibid vs. 67; Quoted from Varadachari, op. cit,, p.175.
116. ibid., vs. 69; p.176.
117. *Tiruvāyamoḷi*, I, 1, 3; Quoted from Varadachari, op. cit., p.179.
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121. Vedāntadeśika, op. cit., vs. 80.
122. Cf. P.N. Srinivascharya, *Mystics and Mysticism*, pp. 180-83.
123. Varadachari, op. cit., pp. 195-97.
124. The *Śaiva Āgamas* are first mentioned by Sundaramūrti, Tirumūlar and Māṇikkavāṣagar—Nilakanta Sastri, op. cit., p. 434.
125. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *Development of Religions in South India*, pp. 40-41.
126. Cf. Nilakanta Sastri, *Aspects of India's History and Culture*, pp. 77 ff.
127. ibid., p. 82.

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128. *Brahma-sūtra*, II, 2, 37,
129. Cf. S.N. Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy* vol. V, p. 6; In fact, the Mathura Pillar Inscription of G.E, 61, refers to the *Ācārya-Paramparā* of Lakulīśa.
130. *Mṛgendrāgama*, p. xi.
131. ibid., p.12.
132. See M.M. G.N. Kaviraj, *Introduction to Brahmasūtras*,
133. *Mṛgendra*, 1.2=*Mṛgendra Tantram*, p.52.
134. The *Padārthas* have been varingly numbered in different texts—seven in *Svāyambhuva*, six in *Pauṣkara* and *Mātaṅga*, five in *Śrīmatpara* and three in *Raurara*. The categories other than *Pati* and *Paśu* are in fact, only elaboration of Pāśa—see *Śaiva-Paribhāṣā*, p. 28.
135. In fact, Uddyotokara has been called Mahā-pāśupata.
136. "*Caitanyaṁ dṛkkīyārūpaṁ*", *Mṛgendra*, 1.5=op. cit., p. 55.
137. *Mṛgendra*, 1.7. *Mala* has been compared to husk or the patina on copper.
138. "*Sarvadarśana Sangraha*", p. 67.
139. "*Sādhakasya turaksārthaṁ tasya rūpaṁ idaṁ smṛtam*", *Pauṣkarāgama*, Quoted from *Saravadarśana Sangraha*, p. 67.
140. Cf. T.M.P. Mahadevan, *History of Philosophy; Eastern and Western*, vol. I, pp. 377-78.
141. See Nilakanta Sastri, op. cit., pp. 63 ff.
142. *Periya Purāṇam* describes their lives.
143. Maria Susai Dhavamony, *Love of God according to Saiva Siddhanta*—a study in mysticism and theology of Saivism, p. 132.
144. Pillai, "Age of Tirujñāna Sambandar", *Tamilean Antiquary Society*, Series No. 2; Maria Susai Dhavamony, also says that he lived in the first half of the seventh century; Cf. Maria Susai Dhavamony, op. cit., p. 39. According to Dikshitar, he flourished in the middle of the seventh century A.D., as according to the evidence of *Periya Puraṇām* he was a contemporary of Appar and Sirutondar, a commander of the Pallava King Narasimha Varman I (A.D. 633-660); cf. Dikshitar, *Studies in Tamil Literature*, p. 92.
145. Maria Susai Dhavamony, *Love of God according to Saiva Siddhanta*, pp. 141-42.
146. ibid., p. 143.
147. Dikshitar, *Studies in Tamil Literature*, p. 92.
148. A.P. Karmarkar, *The Religions of India*, vol. I, p.286.
149. Pillai, *Tamil varalāru*, vol II, p.63.
150. Ayyar, *Saivism in South India*. p.125.
151. Pillai *Tamil Varalāru*, II, pp.27-73.
152. Dikshitar, *Studies in Tamil Literature*, p.97.
153. Karmarkar, *The Religions af India*, vol. I, p. 287.
154. Ayyar, *Saivism in South India*; p. 204. Karmarkar, *The Religions of India*, vol. I, p. 288.
155. V.V. Raman, Introduction to M.V. Visvanatha Pillai's edition of *Tirumandiram*.
156. Karmarkar, *Religions of India*, vol. I, p. 288.

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157. Maria Susai Dhavamony, *Love of God according to Saiva Siddhanta*, pp. 127-28.
158. Quoted from Maria Susai Dhavamony, op, cit., p. 128.
159. ibid., p. 129.
160. ibid.
161. ibid., p. 132.
162. Dikshitar, *Studies in Tamil Literature*, p. 99.
163. Pillai, *Tamil Varalāru*, vol. II, pp. 77-125.
164. Nilakanta Śāstri, *The Pāṇḍyan Kingdom*; pp. 66-67. But in his "*Development of Religions in South India*" he identifies Varaguṇa with Varuguṇa II (A.D. 862-80) also says that the *Tēvāram Tiro* was the inspiration for his works; cf. Nilakanta Sastri, *Development of Religion in South India*, pp. 43-44.
165. Pope, Tiruvāśagam, LXVI.
166. Maria Susai Dhavamony, op. cit., pp. 159-160.
167. ibid., p. 162.
168. ibid., pp. 163-64., cf. Pope, op. cit., p. 72.
169. ibid., p. 169., Karmarkar, op. cit., p. 289.

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8

Bhakti in the Puranas, Especially the Bhagavata

The Purāṇas and their Historical Role

THE purāṇas were ancient compositions. Their core was the bardic legends about royal families and the brahmanical additions of cosmogonic myths and genealogies of sages, etc.[1] Coming down as an ancient tradition[2], they gradually grew in size and became more miscellaneous in content and came to be used as popularizations of doctrines with an eclectic and syncretic point of view. When the Vedic gods and myths tended to become inaccessible, the purāṇas gave them a new and more popular form, and in this process also adapted many popular myths, legends and beliefs. The new ideas which helped the purāṇas to build a bridge between the old hieratic tradition and the current popular and folk tradition or folklore were :

(i) A fully personal and anthropomorphic notion of gods.

(ii) The concept of incarnation which is generalized to include incarnation in any form.

(iii) The use of images and temples.

(iv) The formulation of worship as a personal and domestic ritual symbolizing the veneration of a person.

(v) Emphasis on *japa*, *dhyāna*, *tīrtha*, *dāna*.

(vi) The use of sacred books in popular language and their public recitation (*pāṭha*).

Thus, with the help of these elements the purāṇas systematized several theistic cults in the background of a syncretic philosophy combining elements of Vedānta and Sānkhya.

Though a very strict historical order cannot be followed while considering the development of bhakti in the purāṇas, as even amidst the very early purāṇas

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there are later additions and sometimes it is very difficult to determine the exact date of a certain purāṇa, yet we can make a broad distinction between the early purāṇas and the late ones. *Vāyu*, *Mārkaṇḍeya*, *Viṣṇu*, *Brahmāṇḍa* and *Matsya*, and also *Harivaṁśa* may be counted as definitely early Purāṇas while *Skanda*, *Brahmavaivarta*, *Padma*, *Garuḍa*, etc. are as clearly to be placed among the late ones. The position of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* has been debated but recent opinion tends to place it near the earlier than the later group. The earlier purāṇas thus would belong to the Kuṣāṇa and Gupta ages.[3]

The *Vāyu Purāṇa* is regarded as one of the earliest of the purāṇas. Its first edition is said to have been completed by A.D. 300-400 as according to Hazra[4] the limit of the Gupta empire described therein is that before Samudragupta. *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, according to some scholars (Hazra, Pargiter), was originally a part of *Vāyu Purāṇa* and, hence, is also regarded as one of the earliest purāṇas. As regards *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, various scholars like Winternitz and Hazra opine that it should be included amidst the early purāṇas[2]. Though it is a Vaiṣṇavite text, yet it is free from sectarian elements; secondly, the five characteristics of the purāṇas are maintained in it, and, finally, the form in which the stories are narrated as well as the style of formulation of the theory of *avatāravāda* shows that it is earlier than the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. Another argument which points to its antiquity is that the method of counting *nakṣatras* is prior to that of Varāhamihira. If the date of Varāhamihira is considered to be in 5th century A.D., *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* should certainly be regarded as older.[6]

Hazra and Pargiter believe the *Matsya Purāṇa* to be as old as the late third century A.D. or beginning of the fourth century.[7] Neither the limits of the empire of Samudragupta nor of his predecessors are given. The genealogy is limited to that of the Āndhra kings and Pargiter believes that this must have been added at the time of Yajña Śrī Śātakarni.[8]

The *Harivaṁśa Purāṇa* has been believed to be not later than A.D. 400.[9] The *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* is, again, clearly another of the early purāṇas.[10] Some of its sections should in fact be considered among the earliest in the purāṇas.

For the purpose of our discussion the *Bhāgavata* holds the most important place among all the purāṇas and hence needs a more detailed analysis than others. Many scholars have made an attempt to fix the date of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* on the basis of literary and other data but, unfortunately, there is no unanimity in their conclusion. C. V. Vaidya placed it in the tenth century A.D.,[11] and Durgashankar Sastri also reached the conclusion that it cannot be placed before the ninth century.[12] On the other hand, B. N. Krishnamurty Sharma is inclined to assign it a date prior to the sixth century A.D.,[13] and A. N. Ray has specified the limit between A.D. 550-650.[14] In this connection the discussions by R. C. Hazra[15] and J. N. Banerjea[16] are also to be noted. V. S. Agrawal assumes it to belong to the sixth century A.D., and thus agrees with Hazra.

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Scholars generally are inclined to take the Dravida country to be the region where the *Bhāgavata* was composed. J. N. Benerjea states that it was composed in the south, most probably in the Pāṇḍya country.[17] C. V. Vaidya's conclusions have also conformed to the same opinion. Ray has also stated that the author of the *Bhāgavata* was a native of the Tamil country and was quite familiar with and proud of his country, its holy places and rivers as also of Tamil *Āḷvārs*.[18] This location is based more on the supposed connection with the *Āḷvārs* and is presumptive rather than convincing.[19]

Keeping in view the early and the late purāṇas and, the ideas which helped the purāṇas to build a bridge between the old hieratic traditions and the current popular folklore, let us consider the development of devotion in the purāṇas.

The ālambana or object of bhakti

The upaniṣads had long back established the theory of Parabrahman—one God. Many gods had lost their popularity due to rigid ritualism by that time. Only two gods—Viṣṇu and Śiva—were exceptions. Their devotees identified these gods with Parabrahman and Parameśvara. This is seen in the case of Śiva very early as in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*. In the case of *Viṣṇu* this process is seen completed in the *Gītā* where Kṛṣṇa combines in him the supreme Brahman of the Upaniṣad, a popular god Vāsudeva and Viṣṇu who had emerged as the highest deity of brahmanical mythology in the later Vedic age. The result of this development of the metaphysical form of these two gods (i.e. their identification with Parabrahma) was that even in the later religious literature as in the purāṇas when either of them is spoken of, he is referred to as all-pervading, all-inclusive and supreme Lord of the universe. Many times both of them receive the same epithets in the same purāṇa. The writers did not see any basic contradiction in this. Already the Lord in the *Gītā* had declared that whatever form any devotee with faith wishes to worship, He makes that faith steady—that all forms are the forms of the one supreme. Secondly, the concept of trinity had become popular long back even in the time of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Hence no irreconcilable competition arose between Śiva and Viṣṇu. It is true that some purāṇas give stories showing the supremacy of Viṣṇu over Śiva or *vice versa*, but even in these the differences are ultimately resolved by the concept of the trinity, or their unity at the metaphyical level. Here are some examples:

Though in the *Vāyu Purāṇa* it is stated that Māheśvara is the highest god and Viṣṇu comes after him,[20] yet at other places both are shown as equals.[21] At one place where Śiva shows his love towards Viṣṇu their equality is very clear.[22] In the *Matsya Purāṇa* at times the superiority of Viṣṇu is seen, e.g. Śiva, oppressed by Andhaka, goes to Viṣṇu; Śiva goes to Viṣṇu for help when he had chopped off the fifth head of Brahmā;[23] at other times, the superiority of Śiva is seen—gods headed by Hari, Brahmā and others do not know the greatness of Śiva.[24]

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In the *Harivaṁśa* their equality is clearly witnessed. In the incident of the war between Bāṇāsura and Kṛṣṇa, Śiva takes the former's side. But then Kṛṣṇa affirms his oneness with Śiva in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. It is also said that both are eternally one and both are yogis.[25] At another place Mārkaṇḍeya tells Brahmā about *Harihara-Brahmā*—thus establishing the trinity.[26]

Madhusūdana Sarasvatī in his '*Bhagavadbhaktirasāyanam*' elucidating the differences between Brahmavidyā and bhakti, says that, while bhakti arises from hearing the texts which narrate the greatness of the Lord's qualities, Brahmavidyā arises from listening to the Vedantic Mahāvākya.[97] Let us then see what are the qualities of the Lord as enumerated in the purāṇas which promote bhakti. A fully anthropomorphic form which makes them more personal is given to the gods. On the other hand, their metaphysical nature is also elaborated so that their greatness is conceived.

We see in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* that the world is said to have been produced by Viṣṇu, it exists in him; He is the cause of its continuance, and cessation; He is the world.[28] He is indeterminate being and self-awareness[29] and being, consciousness and bliss are His three powers.[30] It also says that He is the Hiraṇyagarbha, Hari and Śankara (these are the three hypostases of Viṣṇu).[31] He is the cause of final emancipation, is the smallest of the small, is in all created beings, is the unchanged imperishable Puruśottama, is one with true wisdom, is truly known, eternal and incorrupt.[32]

Pradhāna (primary matter), *puruṣa* (spirit), *vyakta* (visible substance) and *kāla* (time) are considered to be the expressive forms of Viṣṇu.[33] These four forms in their due proportion are the cause of the production of the phenomenon of creation, preservation and destruction of the world. Viṣṇu himself is the manifest and the unmanifest, spirit and time, and sports like a playful boy in creation, etc.[34]

The *Vāyu Purāṇa* and *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* both speak of the three *padas* of Viṣṇu. He is identified with Nārāyaṇa in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*.[35] *Viṣṇu*, *Vāyu*, *Brahmāṇḍa* and *Matsya* Purāṇas all identify him with *Vāsudeva*. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* says that 'All ātmās are one, the whole universe is Vāsudeva's form'.[36] This is found in the story of Nidāgha and Ṛbhu told by Bharata in the guise of a brāhmaṇa.

Viṣṇu is the performer of the rites of devotion, He is the rite, He is the fruit which it bestows, He is the implement by which it is performed. There is nothing besides the illimitable Hari.[37] The essence of the supreme is defined by the term '*Bhagavata*'. It is the denomination of the eternal God and is convenient to us for His worship. The letter *bha* indicates the cherisher and the supporter of the universe, *ga* the leader, impeller and creator. The disyllable *bhaga* indicates six properties—dominion, might, glory, splendour, wisdom, and dispassion. The purport of the letter *va* is that elemental spirit in which all beings exist and which exists in all beings. Hence is for Vāsudeva.[38] Viśṇu is identified with all gods and elements, with everything.[39]

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Hence we see that the nature of god is described in such a way that he automatically becomes the fit object of devotion.

In the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* it is specifically stated that Nārāyaṇa has two forms—*nirguṇa* and *saguṇa*. *Nirguṇa*, the aim of yogis, is known as Vāsudeva. *Saguṇa* has three forms. His form where the *tamas* quality predominates is *Śesa*. The *sattva* quality appears in the form of incarnations by which the world is maintained and dharma founded. *Rājas* predominates in his *sarpa-śayya* form. The universe is created by it.[40] Regarding the concrete (*sākāra*) and the abstract (*nirākāra*) forms of the Lord the *Padma Purāṇa* says that while the *sākāra svarūpa* has the advantage of serving him the *nirākāra* has only *rasa*,[41] —thus showing that even the devotion to the formless (*nirākāra bhakti*) has bliss (*rasa*). By worshipping the concrete form (*sākāra-upāsanā*) a devotee naturally knows His abstract nature (*nirākāra svarūpa*).[42]

All these attributes of the Lord are described in great detail in the later purāṇas as the *Bhāgavata* with further elaborations. It is said that as an earthen vessel is made from mud and on being destroyed reverts back to mud, so the whole world is born from the Lord and reverts back to Him. To be more accurate it seems so. Just as the description of the earthen vessel is the description of mud, so the description of other gods as Indra, Varuṇa is the description of the Lord.[43] '*Kāla*' or time is another of His forms. All the natural phenomena do their work by being prompted by its fear.[44] Hence he is the great controller of the universe. He is described as eternally free, pure *sattva* form, all knowing, *Paramātman*, without any faults, first puruṣa, endowed with six qualities or *āiśvaryas* and Lord of the three guṇas.[45] He is the mine of all beauty, *mādhurya* and *aiśvaryas*.[46] He is the root of all guṇas, his form is pure bliss, pure experience, pure spirit (ātmā).[47]

It is natural to love such a god. Besides this, He is also contemplated in his *sākāra* form for the purpose of meditation or *dhyāna*. He is beautifully featured and limbed, dark in colour, *śrivatsa* on His chest, garland around His neck, conch, *cakra*, mace and *padma* in His four hands and clad in yellow clothes...[48]

Let us now examine the Puraṇic description of Śiva which helped to promote his devotion. According to the *Vāyu* and *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* the whole world is a form of Śiva.[49] The *Vāyu Purāṇa* also says that jñāna, renunciation, *aiśvarya*, austerities, truth, forgiveness, capability to create the universe, self knowledge—all these qualities are present in Śiva. Hence he is known as Mahādeva. By his *aiśvarya* he has defeated the *devatās*, by valour *asuras*, by jñāna *ṛśis* and by yoga men.[50] Even in the time of epic his form had fully emerged as a god easily pleased by austerities, as a boon giver, pleased by bhakti. His metaphysical form had fully emerged as far back as the age of the upaniṣads (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*). In the purāṇas all these features were developed and new ones added to a great extent. Rudra originally a fierce god had gradually acquired benevolent qualities through the course of centuries. The purāṇas show both his aspects. He receives both the

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types of epithets. The *Vāyu*[51] and *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*[52] refer to him as *krūra* and *vibhatsa*; also '*bhīma*' and '*ugra*' whereas at other places they call him dear.[53] His linga form is seen very often in the purāṇas, e.g. in the *Vāyu*, *Brahmāṇḍa* and *Matsya Purāṇa*. In fact, liṅga worship is a prominent feature of Pauraṇic Śaivism. His troops (*gaṇas*) are also mentioned in the purāṇas.[54] Sometimes he is identified with the sun—Ravi Śankara.[55]

Avatāra

Let us now see what the purāṇas say about the theory of avatārahood. A full-fledged theory of avatāra had already been propounded in the *Gītā*. The purpose of the avatāra is to protect the world, to keep it going on the path of righteousness and most of all to act as a spiritual leader. Whereas in the epics the divinity of Kṛṣṇa comes out more in his wisdom than in the performance of miracles. This situation became different later on. In the purāṇas, besides all these aspects of the avatāra, his miraculous character comes to the forefront. This is seen most in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. Various stages of avatārahood are seen in the purāṇas, e.g. *alpāmśa avatāra* (very partial incarnation) *amśa-avatāra* (partial incarnation) and *pūrṇa avatāra* (full incarnation). According to Hazra[56] these show the different stages in the evolution of avatārahood. But it should not be forgotten that these terms were used to denote different types of avatāras also. For example in the *Harivamśa Purāṇa amśāvatāra* is understood as the avatārahood of the various *devatās*.

Among the various avatāras ten are prominent. Even in the *Mahābhārata*, Kūrma, Matsya, Varāha, Nṛsimha, Vāmana, Paraśurāma, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Kalki and Buddha are mentioned.[57] In the *Vāyu Purāṇa* — Nṛsimha,[58] Vāmana,[59] Dattātreya,[60] Māndhātā,[61] Jāmadagnya,[62] Rāma,[63] Vedavyāsa,[64] Kṛṣṇa[65] and Kalki[66] are mentioned. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* mentions Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha,[67] Nṛsimha,[68] Vāmana,[69] Jāmadagnya,[70] Rāma,[71] Kṛṣṇa,[72] and Kalki.[73] The *Matsya Purāṇa* has Matsya, Kūrma Varāha, Nṛsimha, Vāmana, Rāma (Paraśu), Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha, Kalki at one place[74] and at another place instead of Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma is mentioned.[75] At another Nārāyaṇa, Nṛsimha, Vāmana, Dattātreya, Māndhāta, Cakravartin, Jāmadagnya, Dāśarathī Rāma, Vedavyāsa, Buddha, and Kalki are mentioned.[76] In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* many avatāras are mentioned — Nara-nārāyaṇa, Rāma, Dattātreya, Sanat-kumāra, Ṛṣabha, Hayagrīva, Matsya, Nṛsimha, Vāmana, Paraśurāma, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa.[77]

Regarding the purpose of the avatāras all the purāṇas agree that it is to protect the world and to keep it going on the path of righteousness.[78] To save the world from a deluge of iniquity by the rites of religion is allegorically shown by the Varāha-avatāra.[79]

In the *Matsya Purāṇa* it is stated that the Lord takes different forms prompted by his māyā,[80] and also for taking pleasure among the mortals,[81] i.e. for *vihāra*. An opposite reason is given in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* where it is stated that the Lord is totally uninvolved in the troubles of the world but He

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takes avatāra to give endless delight to His omnipresent devotees (*sarvagata bhaktas*).[82] In fact, His appearance in human form and performing *līlās* should be considered as His divine grace towards the bhaktas.[83]

God's attitude towards the bhakta

While considering the avatārahood of God we have already seen that one of His main concerns is to protect the devotee. This is seen as early as in the Vedic literature and also in the epics. But in the purāṇas the miraculous element becomes more prominent than in the epics and a well developed theory of bhakti gives it a different colour from that of the vedas. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* when Hiraṇyakaśipu asks his demons to attack Prahlāda with weapons, the latter prays to God and states that Viṣṇu is present in the weapons and in his body too; and so the weapons would fail to harm him, and they do not. Similarly, other tortures also do not affect him.[84] In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* also this story is narrated and the Lord's protection shown.[85] In the case of Śiva this aspect is shown very often. He goes out of the way to protect his bhaktas. He even incurs the enmity of Kṛṣṇa sometimes in this gesture. This is shown when he protects Bāṇāsura.[86]

When pleased by a devotee Viṣṇu is always seen to be granting boons to him. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* he tells Dhruva that though the object of his worship has been attained by seeing him (Viṣṇu) yet he (Dhruva) must demand a boon as the sight of him (Viṣṇu) is never unproductive.[87]

In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* also Kṛṣṇa is shown granting boons, but receiving his love from him is stressed more than in any other purāṇa. Dharma receives all the worldly boons from the Lord and also his own abode.[88] It is also said that Hari gives all those things which the devotee desires.[89] He tells Prahlāda that even though he desires nothing, yet he should accept all the worldly things for his (the Lord's) happiness.[90] But the important thing in God's attitude towards His bhakta is His intense love. He tells Uddhava that He likes devotees such as him (Uddhava) more than His son Brahmā, soul Śankara, brother Balarāma and his wife Lakṣmī,[91] and the lord roams after such devotees constantly so that the mud flown by their feet can be scattered over Him (the Lord) thereby making Him pure.[92] The bhaktas have the Lord's heart in their hands.[93] As a *pativratā* woman has her husband under her, so the bhakta by his love has the Lord under him.[94] Though he cannot be conquered by anyone in the three *lokas*, a bhakta can conquer him.[95] He is satisfied even if a little water is offered to him with devotion, needless to speak of other things of worship pūjā.[96]

Even the cāṇḍālas receive his grace if they are true devotees.[97] For him everything becomes auspicious and he attains the Lord's auspicious realm (*Kalyāṇadhāma*).[98] The Lord gives endless delight (*ānanda*) to His bhaktas.[99] He makes Himself attainable by any relation which the devotee cultivates with Him—

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be it of love, anger, fear, friendship. It attaches the devotee to the Lord making his relation 'Divine'.[100] When Sudāmā goes to Him with *Sakhyabhāva* He is so touched that tears come to His eyes, He Himself washes Sudāmā's feet;[101] gives him all wealth which even the gods do not possess.[102] He is also approachable to a devotee by *vātsalya* if the devotee conceives of Him as a child.[103] He frees his bhaktas from all sins.[104]

Though the Lord is so much under the devotee that He even gives Himself to him,[105] yet He is not easily attainable in the sense that He plays hide and seek with him as He did with the *gopīs*. When the devotee attains to Him a little, He disappears, so that the devotee might crave for Him and His longing might become more intence and thus He appears again.[106] He is also shown as a jealous God who tries His best to make His devotee only His. In this process He sometimes takes away all his material possessions and gives him constant failure, so that he leaves all hopes to attain worldly goods and devotes himself only to Vāsudeva,[107] He does it so that the bhakta might be able to attain Parabrahman. This is His grace or "blessing in disguise".

Hari, Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa is different from other gods including Śiva who are very easily moved by their devotee's prayers and give everything to the devotee.[108] Another reason given for this difference between the two is that Śiva is the ruling deity of the Ego (*shaṅkāra*). Now *ahaṅkāra* is comprised of ten *indriya*s, five *mahābhūtas* and the mind. All materialistic things are gained by worshipping the deities presiding over these. But Viṣṇu is beyond all this. One who prays to Him also becomes beyond the guṇas like Him.

Bhakta's attitude towards God

The goal to be achieved by a devotee is the realization of the infinite Self (*Paramātman*) by his single-minded devotion (*ananya bhakti or ekānta rati*). This bhakti or *rati* should be purified by moral observances which include renunciation of all desires, practice of *ahiṁsā*, truthfulness, non-stealing, brahmacarya and greedlessness; along with these, the aspirant is required to indulge himself into the study of scriptures, should aim at obtaining purity of body and mind and contentment; he should exercise control over the senses and observe penance. At one place the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* prescribes to the aspirant the practice of body-posture, breath-control, withdrawl of the senses from sense-objects, fixation of mind and meditation.[109] One is immediately struck here by the similarity that exists between these prescriptions and the *yama* and *niyama* of Patañjali's *Yogasūtras*.

A true devotee does not care for material gains and has his mind constantly fixed on the feet of his Lord. This ultimately leads to his absorption in Him. Similarly, the boon that Prahlāda demanded was that in all the births that he might pass, his faith in Acyuta to remain constant and that he should feel devoted to the Lord with the same interest as a worldly minded person feels for sensual

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pleasures.[110] In the *Harivaṁśa Purāṇa*, Ghaṇṭāparva asks the same boon.[111] He also asks the Lord to make his prayer to go on without any obstacles, and that he might remember God even at the time of his death,[112] that he might abide with the Lord always in joy and in sorrow.[113]

In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* this attitude of the bhakta is shown all over.[114] Dhruva was not satisfied when he got all the worldly gods.[115] He thinks that he was unlucky to ask worldly things from a god who destroys worldly attachments.[116] Later, when Kubera asks him to demand a boon he asks the Lord's constant remembrance.[117] The devotees are seen frequently to demand the company of ideal devotees from the Lord,[118] and develop personal relationships with the Lord. It is stated that whatever relationship they cultivate with the Lord it becomes divine.[119] The devotees are thus shown as craving to serve the Lord, and also regarding him as their friend.[120] According to Madhusūdana Sarasvatī in intense devotion the devotee regards himself as a servant of the lord and as the Lord's friend—both at the same time. This is called *sevya-sevaka-bhāva* which has *dāsya*, *sakhya*, or *miśrita bhāva*. These *bhāvas* according to him come under the *preyorati*. *Gopas*, Sudāmā and Uddhava conceive of this relation with the Lord.

Another relationship which the devotee develops with the Lord is that of mother and child, concieving the Lord as child. This is an example of *pālya-pālaka-bhāva* and comes under *vātsalyarati* according to Madhusūdana Sarasvatī. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* gives many examples of this.[121] The Lord is also regarded as a lover by the devotees. A most intense relationship with Him is seen through this *śṛṅgāra rasa* though it is a *miśrita rasa*. The *gopīs* give an ideal example of this and the tenth skandha of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* is full of such examples. The *gopīs* wanted Śrī Kṛṣṇa so much that they performed austerities and *vratas* to attain him. On one such occasion when they were bathing in the river, Kṛṣṇa took away their clothes. When they demanded their clothes, he asked them to come in front of him and take them. At first the *gopīs* were unwilling but then they came out of the river without any clothes in front of Kṛṣṇa. This simple incident points to a deep secret of bhakti. The devotee should forget himself entirely and come to God naked, that is to say, in his true form without any worldy trappings.[122] The *gopīs* love the Lord so much that when they hear His flute they come running to Him—forgetting all about their husbands and children even,[123] and when the Lord asks them to go back to their families (to test their love) they become depressed.[124] Unlike Śuka, etc. whose bhakti requires great effort, the bhakti of *gopīs* is shown as very spontaneous.[125] They could not bear to be separated from him—a single moment of their separation from the Lord seemed to them like eternity.[126] When Kṛṣṇa goes to Mathurā their sorrow becomes indescribable.[127] They had reached such a state of bhakti while regarding Kṛṣṇa as their husband that for them everything had become the Lord's form.[128]

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Other relationships of the bhakta with the Lord are—that of conceiving Him as a father and teacher (guru),[129] or as a personal saviour.[130] Condition of devotee's mind in the state of bhakti—a molten state—is called *dravāvasthā*. It is a state of the mind which is wholly overcome with feeling and is in a state of continuous melting or *druti*—having God for its object.[131] In this state he sees only the Lord everywhere and in all beings.[132] He does not even distinguish himself from the Lord. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* Prahlāda meditating upon Viṣṇu as identical with his own spirit became one with him and regarded himself as divinity.[133] Hence the bhakta develops a state of ecstasy. When the mind is in a complete 'molten' state, it develops various involuntary feelings and sensations called *sāttvika bhāvas*—astonishment, perspiration, horripilation, breaking of the voice, shivering or trembling, becoming pale, tears, stopping of the mind from working :

"*Stambhaḥ svedoatha romāñcaḥ svarbhangoatha vepathuḥ*
Vaivarṇyamaśru-pralaya ityaṣṭau sātvikā matāḥ."[134]

All the above *bhavas* are seen in the state of ecstacy in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. Kṛṣṇa tells Uddhava in the eleventh *skandha* that the devotee's whole body trembles, there is a melting of the heart and mind with delight, he has tears of pure delight in his eyes. Both in his inner and outer being there is a continuous flow of love (bhakti).[135] His voice is full of emotion, he weeps but also laughs heartily—sometimes he starts singing and dancing.[136] Ideal examples are many—Dhruva, Prahlāda, *gopīs*, Uddhava etc. they used to forget themselves completely in a trance.[137] Mārkaṇḍeya could not even know that Gaurī and Śankara themselves had come to him, so engrossed was he in his trance.[138] The *gopīs* are full of these moods (*bhāvas*). They are so full of ecstacy that when they try to embrace Kṛṣṇa their arms do not move.[139] The Lord tells Uddhava in Chapter II that the devotee should sing and enact His play (līlās).[140] In fact when the devotee is in the ecstatic stage he himself begins to enact the Lord's play (līlās) as he forgets the distinction between himself and the Lord. When Kṛṣṇa hides himself, the *gopīs* become very depressed but even they start enacting his līlās. One of them becomes the child Kṛṣṇa and pretends to kill the demon Tṛṇāvarta, another imitates his walk and so on.[141] In the *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* Akrūra swoons away. His eyes start watering when he fixes his heart on the Lord's feet.[142]

The devotee wants to serve the lord with all his sense organs.[143] In his strong emotion of bhakti he gets jealous even of Lakṣmī. In the *Bhāgavaṭa Purāṇa* Pṛthu tells the Lord that he is jealous even of Lakṣmī as she serves the Lord constantly which he (Pṛthu) wants to do. He (Pṛthu) is also confident that the Lord will support him if he quarrels with Lakṣmī.[144] In the *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* it is stated that the bhakta can meditate even in a noisy place,[145] his heart is dedicated to the Lord's feet even in dreams.[146] He has deep interest in Kṛṣṇa's story and is thrilled by it.[147]

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Character of the Bhakta

To acquire this bhakti a devotee has to have certain qualities in himself. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* Yama speaks of one 'who doesn't deviate from the duties prescribed for his caste', is indifferent towards his friends and enemies, has Janārdana in his pure mind, does not covet another's gold, does not have malice and other passions.[148] In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* the Lord tells Uddhava that the bhakta is kindness itself even-minded (*samadarśin*), pure, and must have self-control. He does not even hoard material things or even try to get them. He has patience and is not lazy.[149] He is neither too detached nor too involved, and has done good deeds in his previous births.[150] He should always want the company of other devotees who are full of love for God.[151] He is never sorrowful.[152] An ideal example of an even-minded devotee was Citraketu who had risen beyond sorrow and joy. Once when he had displeased Śaṅkara and Pārvatī and the latter cursed him to become a demon, even then he was not sorrowful but calmly accepted the curse and apologised.[153] Another quality of the bhakta is that he does not show violence towards any being—big or small.[154] The purāṇas are full of such devotees—as Prahlāda and Dhruva.

At one place in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* the influence of the bodhisattva ideal is seen. Prahlāda tells the God Nṛsimha that he grieves for those people who are not the Lord's bhaktas. Unlike the sages in the woods he wants to help these misguided people. For their sake he does not even want liberation (mukti).[155] In the *Brahmavaivarta* Purāṇa also this ideal is seen.[156]

Types of Bhaktas

On the basis of their love towards God the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* classifies the bhaktas. In the skandha III Bhagavān Kapiladeva distinguishes the bhaktas into *tāmasa*, *rājasa* and *sāttvika*. A person who worships the Lord with violence, pride and hatred in his heart (generally to show others down) is a *tāmasa* bhakta. One who worships desiring various materialistic things is *rājasa* bhakta. But the person who worships the Lord to dissovle his sins, to surrender himself to the Lord or with a feeling that it is his duty to worship, he is a *sāttvika* bhakta.[157] At another place bhaktas are distinguished into *uttama*, *madhayma*, *prakṛta*. The *uttama bhakta* feels the Lord in all beings.[158] He thinks that whatever happens to him is done by God, and is equal-minded in sorrow and happiness.[159] He is so much engrossed in the Lord that even he gets all the material things he does not care for[160] Even the Lord does not leave such a devotee.[161]

His mind is in a fully molten state (*dravāvasthā*). Such a mind retains a vivid impression of the Lord's form even after the trance is over. It is like a piece of sealing wax which retains the impression even after it cools down.[162]

When the bhakta's mind is in a lesser state of *dravāvasthā*—a state of *śithilībhāva* or 'loosened' state—when there is only *vāsanābhāva*, then he is a middling devotee *madhyama bhakta*. He does not retain the Lord's form when

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other objects come in front of him. But yet "he loves God, has friendship with His devotees, helps the grieved and the ignorant and does not care for those who hate God".[163] When the *dravāvasthā* is neither complete nor is generated in some form but still the devotee tries to attain it and faithfully follows all the rules which promote that state, then he is a 'common' devotee (*prākṛta* bhakta.)

In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, it is said that the person who worships the Lord's image with faith but neither has faith in the Lord's devotees nor in any other being, he is called a *prākṛta* bhakta.[164]

Besides the above classifications it is also said that an intense hatred of the Lord also leads to God by constantly thinking about Him. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, it is stated that Hiraṇyakaśipu was born as Rāvaṇa who got all worldly things. Rāvaṇa was born as Śiśupāla who attained final liberation due to constantly uttering the Lord's name even though in anger.[165] In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* this point is further elaborated.[166]

But the scholars of *bhaktirasa* as Madhusūdana Sarasvatī believe that in this type of hatred there is no *rasa* which leads to Love of God. In the case of Śiśupāla 'pure rage' (*śuddha raudra*) is shown while in the case of Kamsa, there is rage and fear (*raudra-bhayānaka*) but both do not lead to love.[167] Hence those references in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* might be poetic exaggerations.

Occurrence of the word bhakti and its definition in the Bhāgavata

The word 'bhakti' occurs even in the early Purāṇas. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* it occurs while describing the king Śatadhanu's religious activities, and it is said that he meditated on Viṣṇu following the path of bhakti.[168] Even when Prahlāda demands the boon that his devotion in Acyuta may never know decay, this word occurs.[169] In the *Matsya Purāṇa* it occurs in the context of the *vrata* called *vibhūti dvādaśī*. It is said that the one and only means of pleasing Kṛṣṇa is bhakti,[170] the worshipper craves only for unflinching devotion to his favourite God,[171] there is nullification of his karman by bhakti.[172]

In the purāṇas the word occurs innumerable times. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* also makes an attempt at defining bhakti. Bhagavān Kapiladeva tells his mother Devahūti that in the case of a person whose whole mind is devoted to God, this natural tendency towards the *sattvamūrti* Śrī Hari is called the Lord's bhakti.[173] It has to be remembered that there are two types of bhakti: *saguṇa* bhakti and *nirguṇa* bhakti. The former may again be divided into three types, *sāttvika*, *rājasa* and *tāmasa*. While the *rājasa* bhakti is motivated by the desire for fame, wealth and other mundane pleasures and the *tāmasa* is motivated by envy and malevolence, the *sāttvika* bhakti is a pure impulse wherein all actions are dedicated to God. On the other hand, *nirguṇa* bhakti is completely free from all the guṇas. It is an uninterrupted devotion to god which spontaneously overtakes the whole being of the devotee.[174] In spontaneous and unmotivated bhakti there is no desire of

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being in His service and acting for His delight. A true bhakta always delights in serving God.[175] It is also identified with Brahman and nirvāṇa.[176]

Types of bhakti

While discussing the types of bhaktas we had pointed out that there are *sāttvika*, *rājasika* and *tāmasika* bhaktas,[177] their bhaktis would naturally fall into these categories.

In the seventh *skandha* of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, nine types of bhakti are described.[178] These are *śravaṇa*, *kīrtana*, *smaraṇa*, *pādasevana*, *arcana*, *vandana*, *dāsya*, *sakhya* and *ātmanivedana*.[179]

(i) *Śravaṇa* or listening to the Lord's guṇas—It is said that the Lord had taken a divine 'playful body' (*līlā-śarīra*) and performed many strange deeds with it. Remembering His each and every deed a man can nullify his karmans. One who wants to acquire the right to serve the Lord's feet should listen to his līlās.[180] Parīkṣit is an ideal example of the bhakta who became famous in *Śravaṇa bhakti*. The whole of *Bhāgavata* is actually narrated to him.

(ii) *Kīrtana*—If the Lord's name, līlā, and qualities are sung then He Himself comes inside the singer's heart and removes all his sorrows.[181] Voice is meaningful only when it sings the Lord's glory.[182] We see nearly all the bhaktas in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, e.g. Prahlāda, Dhruva, etc.—singing the Lord's glory when they are in a state of ecstacy. In fact singing is the quickest method to establish connection with God.

(iii) *Smaraṇa*—Remembrance of the Lord's feet destroys all inauspiciousness, increases auspiciousness, purifies the heart, increases bhakti and the jñāna which leads to renunciation.[183] All the bhaktas constantly take the Lord's name. Dhruva asks Kubera the boon that he may remember the Lord's name constantly.

(iv) *Pādasevana*—Those who go after materialistic things often do not attain them, but the Lord gives himself to those who worship his feet.[184]

(v) *Arcana*—One who worships the Lord with Vedic or Tāntric methods acquires both the types of *siddhis*.[185]

(vi) *Vandana*—This is the glorifying of the Lord's qualities, līlās etc. e.g. when the Lord blessed Bali he said that "there is no end to the greatness of bowing down to the Lord as it gives the same results to the non-devotee as well as the devotees. The grace that I have received from you is not obtained even by the *devatās* and *lokapālas*".[186]

(vii) *Dāsya*—What else is left for the servants of that Lord than the recitation of whose name washes away all the sins.[187] Pṛthu was jealous even of Lakṣmī and vied with her in serving the Lord.[188]

(viii) *Sakhya*—"Blessed are the fates of the people of Vraja whose friend is Lord Kṛṣṇa.[189] The ideal examples of the Lord's friends are Arjuna and

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Uddhava. Arjuna is full of grief and remembers his friendship with the Lord when he leaves for his final abode (*paramadhāma*)[190] and so does Uddhava.[191]

(ix) *Ātmanivedana*—Ultimate surrender to the Lord with the unflinching faith that He will save. The Lord says that when the devotee renounces all the karmas and surrenders himself to Him, He acquires immortality and becomes one with the Lord or acquires *sārūpya*.[192] Uddhava tells the Lord in the 11th *skandha* that the Lord alone is the saviour who will save him from the worldly illusion (māyā).[193]

All these nine types of bhakti can come under *sādhana bhakti*. We notice two main divisions of bhakti in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. Though both the types are present in early purāṇas also but in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* it is specifically pointed out that there is a *sādhana bhakti* and a *sādhya bhakti*. If 'bhakti' is derived with an instrumental affix giving to it the sense of the means for serving, then we have the *sādhana bhakti*. Serving (*bhajana*) means making the mind share the form of the Lord by reflecting or mirroring it. The means to this are *śravana*, *kīrtana* etc. If bhakti is derived with a suffix forming abstract nouns then it means serving the Lord i.e. the mind's having the form of the Lord through reflection i.e. bhakti itself is *bhagavadrūpatā* of the mind. An excellent example where both occur is—bhakti (*sādhana*) makes one remember himself and also others, the Lord who destroys sins, generates that (*sādhya*) bhakti by which the whole body becomes thrilled.

"Smarantassmarayantaś ca mitho aghaughaharaṁ hariṁ
Bhaktyā sañjātāya bhaktyā bibhratyutpulakaṁ tanuṁ."[194]

In this condition of *parā bhakti* or *sādhya bhakti* a bhakta is full of bliss and ecstacy. He might see in his mind's vision the līlās of the Lord and might start laughing, he might start talking with the Lord dancing or singing....[195]

At another place—'Those who after conquering the six enemies (*kāma*, *krodha*, etc.) perform the bhakti of the Lord attain infinite love of the Lord's feet.[196] Here performing the bhakti is the *sādhana bhakti* and the infinite love in the God's feet is the *sādhya bhakti*.

Another example of *sādhya bhakti*—When on hearing the Lord's qualities and līlās a person is full of happiness, due to tears his voice falters, and leaving all hesitation he begins shouting, singing and dancing. He laughs sometimes, weeps sometimes and sometimes meditates or sees everyone with the feeling that he is seeing the Lord in them. Calls Hari, Jagatpati and Nārāyaṇa with deep breath, then all his knots are cut asunder and his heart acquires the Lord's form. He acquires the Lord.[197]

Performing all actions desirelessly with a sense of dedicating them to the Lord is equivalent to applying the mind on the *Pārabrahman*.[198] Hence doing actions desirelessly with a sense of dedication is also another aspect of the *parā* or *sādhya bhakti*.

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Relation of bhakti with jñāna-yoga and karma-yoga

It has been already stated in the previous chapters[199] that essentially bhakti, jñāna yoga and karma yoga constitute a unity of three grades necessarily connected together. Willing, knowing and feeling are distinguishable aspects of awareness; nevertheless they subsist together and each is affected by the other. These three are integrally united in self-realization. The highest bhakti requires an integral knowledge and action. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* also points to this fact in the chapter where the three yogas are described,[200] though at places the path of bhakti is praised more. Siddhesvara Bhattacharya has argued that the original tradition of the *Bhāgvata* maintained a unique balance between jñāna and *vairāgya* on the one hand and bhakti on the other. An emotional emphasis possibly came from the Tamil saints:[201]

Karma yoga consists of duties prescribed by the scriptures as part of *varṇāśrama dharma*, etc. Its purpose is *cittaśuddhi* or the purification of the mind. It should be performed till it either produces detachment or bhakti.[202] Those who are detached follow the path of knowledge.[203] After this knowledge is perfected true bhakti is realized which is unwavering love for the Lord with total detachment from all the things.[204] The second course is to follow *sādhana bhakti* immediately after karma-yoga and gradually transform all the love and attachment for objects into the love for the Lord, leading at the same time to knowledge and detachment and culminating in *parā bhakti*. The Lord says that a person who is neither too detached, nor too involved can follow this course.[205] Even those people can follow this path who know that these involvements are sorrowful but yet cannot help being involved. Such a person can enjoy all these worldly things realizing in his heart the futility of them and his own limitation. At the same time he should with great faith follow *sādhaṇa bhakti*—bhajana, etc.[206] Gradually with the perfection of his bhakti, the Lord seats Himself in heart and all his attachments are cut asunder.[207]

Hence we see here two ways (a) karma yoga followed by jñāna yoga and jñāna yoga leading to bhakti yoga, (b) karma yoga followed by *sādhana bhakti* leading to *parā bhakti*. But in the second course also jñāna occurs as the dividing line between *sādhana bhakti* and *parā bhakti*. As the Lord also says, when the person becomes free of all the attachments, he suddenly acquires pure jñāna and bhakti.[208]

It is true that the Lord also says that the person who is involved for ever in His bhakti does not need jñāna and renunciation and that he is liberated by bhakti alone.[209] Hence jñāna or renunciation or karman are not being considered inferior because they lead to the same ideal—ultimate love of God—but the path of bhakti is being favoured in comparison to other paths as they are more difficult. The results which are obtained by karma, austerity, jñāna, renunciation are suddenly obtained by bhakti.[210]

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Means to bhakti

Means to bhakti are in short the *navadhā bhakti* (described under the heading "Types of bhakti" which is the *sādhana bhakti* to acquire *sādhya bhakti*).[211] Besides this, some other qualities in the bhakta (also described under the heading "Character of the bhakta") are also required to achieve that higher bhakti.[212]

Faith in the spiritual teacher and his service,[213] performing all one's actions for the Lord and dedicating them to Him,[214] performing austerities,[215] searching Him in one's own heart[216] and performing dhyāna (mental worship)[217] are also important means to acquire bhakti.

In the first *skandha* of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* Nārada tells the means to bhakti. They are summarized by Madhusūdana Sarasvatī thus—serving the people who have become great by bhakti, then becoming their object of pity, then having faith in their dharma, then hearing the qualities of the Lord, then the generation of love for the bhakti of the Lord, then understanding the Lord's form, after this the increasing of the love for God, then seeing the Lord, then having faith that '*bhāgavata-dharmas*' are the ultimate and (*niṣṭhā*), then acquiring the Lord's qualities in oneself, after this having the ultimate limit of love for God.[218] The story of Nārada given in the first *skandha* illustrates the above stages.

In the eleventh *skandha* of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, the Lord summarizes the means to bhakti to Uddhava—"Having faith in the nectar like stories of mine, constantly doing my kīrtana, having faith in my pūjā (worship), saying prayers of glorification, respect in my service, bowing down to me by all the organs of the body, respecting my devotees, considering all beings as my form, performing all actions for me, always uttering my qualities through one's speech, surrendering the heart and mind to me, renouncing all the desires, material things and comforts, surrendering to me with the unflinching faith that I will save by the yajñas, charities, sacrifices, *japas*, fasts, austerities done for me—who does all this has bhakti in me.[219]

Method of Worship

Several methods of worship are described in the Purāṇas—Vedic, Tāntric, dhyāna or mental worship etc. The Lord in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* says that there are three ways of worshipping Him—Vedic, Tāntric and Miśrita. A bhakta can worship by whatever method he likes.[220]

Let us first see the method of *dhyāna yoga* with mantras and *japas* described in the purāṇas. In the *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* it is said that as the supreme form of Viṣṇu cannot be contemplated in early stages of devotion, hence the mind should be directed on the gross form of Hari. Meditation can be done on the Hiraṇyagarbha, Varuṇa, Prajāpati, on anything, with the sense that all is pervaded by the energy of Viṣṇu. Then one should form the mental image of Viṣṇu. Contemplation should be done on His golden bracelet and other ornaments. Then without all

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these one should fix the mind upon the body concentrating on one limb. This process of forming a lively image in the mind exclusive of all other objects constitutes dhyāna which is perfected in six stages—*yama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, bhajana, dhāraṇā*. Then samādhi is attained.[221]

In the *Agni Purāṇa* these are mentioned in great detail—*yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhyāna, dhāraṇā, samādhi. Ahimsā, satya, asteya, brahmacarya, aparigraha* are *yamas*, the *niyamas* are *śauca* (cleanliness), *santoṣa* (satisfaction), *tapas* (austerity), *svādhyāya* (self study) and *Īśvarārādhana* (worship of the Lord). The *yamas* are actually the preparation of the mind for worship. So are the four *niyamas—śauca, santoṣa, tapas* and *svādhyāya. Japa* is taking the Lord's name constantly by mantras. *Īśvarārādhana* is done by sacrifice etc. while doing *mantra-japa*.[222] Sitting in a position suitable for prāṇāyāma is āsana. Prāṇāyāma is the control of breath while doing *japa* (this is *sagarbha prāṇāyāma*). *Pratyāhāra* is trying to control the sense organs involved in worldly pleasures;[223] concentrating on the Lord's form is dhyāna in which one also tries to identify oneself with the Lord. Dhyāna is done alternately with *japa*.[224] *Dhāraṇā* is the form in which the Lord's form is imagined in dhyāna which may be *sākāra* (form) or *nirākāra* (formless).[225] The ultimate state of dhyāna is samādhi in which the devotee is even indifferent to worldly sensations and is in such a state that even if he is offered the whole world and all the worldly things he would renounce all and want only Viṣṇu.[226] In the *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa, bhūta-śuddhi, prāṇāyama, nyāsa* in various parts by mantra—*mantranyāsa, varṇanyāsa*—invocation of the *tīrthas* in water are mentioned. Dhyāna, by *mūla mantra*, concentrating on each part of the deity etc. are also mentioned. In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* the details of *yama, niyama*, etc. are not given and the main stage of dhyāna where the devotee concentrates on the form of the Lord and each and every part of His body is concentrated upon is described in great detail. At first the devotee is asked to be seated in the āsana which is neither very high nor very low, then concentrate his gaze on the tip of the nose. Then do *pūraka, recaka* and *kumbhaka prāṇāyāma* and also try to conquer his sense organs. Then imagine the heart as a lotus on the top of which is a seat on which sun, moon and fire are orbed. Then imagine the Lord's form inside the fire—with beautiful countenance, and physical form, long arms, beautiful, smile, ears adorned with ear-rings, dusky complexion and yellow garments. Śrivatsa and Lakṣmī on his chest, conch, wheel, (*cakra*) mace and lotus in his hands; *Vanamālā* (garland) round his neck.....[227]

Another method of worship is through images. The *pratima-lakṣaṇas* are also described.[228] In the *Agni Purāṇa* the method of worship of various gods is described. In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* it is described in stages and detail. The devotee should first collect the materials for worship. He should face east or north and sit on the āsana of *kuśa* grass. Then he should perform *anganyāsa*, then *kāranyāsa* and then *mantranyāsa*... then worship the *kalaśa* full of water. Then wipe himself and the materials for worship. Then fill three *kalaśas* with

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water for *pādya*, *arghya* and *ācamana* and fill them with required *pūjā* materials and then recite mantras...perform Prāṇāyāma and meditate on the Lord's *jīvapāla* and when it pervades the mind and body then worship it mentally. Then invoke the Lord and establish Him in the image... perform *anganyāsa* by mantras and worship Him...[229] Hence *prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā* or establishing the Lord in the image by invoking the mantras was an important feature of Pauraṇic worship. The image was considered the *arcā* form of the Lord and not a mere symbol of the Lord. Hence *pāda-sevā* or the service of the image was very important. A devotee should bathe the Lord by sandal wood paste, *khas*, camphor, saffron, etc. invoking the mantras, then adorn Him with garland etc. Then offer Him various eatables as jaggery *khīra*, *ladoos* (*naivedya*), etc. He should also arrange for dancing and singing in front of the Lord's image.[230] But it is also said that those who worship only the image and do not realize the all pervasiveness of the Lord in all beings, their worship is uselss.[231] He is pleased even if small things are offered with bhakti.

In the *Padma Purāṇa* a very detailed description of pūjā is given... awakening the Lord, dressing him, etc.[232]

Another method of worship in the purāṇas is the Vedic worship though the dhyāna and pūjā described above were more popular as they were very directly connected with the emotion of bhakti. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* it is stated that those who do not perform yajñas receive obstacles in the *pravṛtti mārga*.[233] In the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, yajña is said to be fruitful.[234] In the *Matsya Purāṇa* Nala performed yajña.[235] *Citi*, *yajñaśālā*, *yūpa*, *paśu*, *agni*, *kuśa*, *samidhā*, etc. are described in the purāṇas. But as the main object of the yajñas was to obtain material gains while dhyāna and pūjā aimed more at obtaining the love of God, they were more popular. The *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* says that the method of worship are many but the main thing is the strong emotion of bhakti which should be generated by them.[236]

It has always been stressed in the Purāṇas that traditional ritualism devoid of bhakti leads nowhere.[237]

Grace and bhakti—sudden dawn of bhakti

Following the methods and means of worship is not all. The Lord must be moved by the devotee's endeavours. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* says that the being does not attain him by his own *puruṣārtha* but by His grace—

"Na yasya Kaścātititarti māyāṁ
vayā jano muhyati veda nārthaṁ
Taṁ nirjitātmātmagunaṁ pareṣāṁ
namāma bhūteṣu samaṁ carantaṁ."[238]

This concept of grace is very old and can be seen even in the upaniṣads.[239]

The Lord's incarnation is an act of His grace for destroying evil and doing good for the good people.[240] In the *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* this concept is stretched

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still further and it is said that the very fact that the formless God assumes a form for the devotee is an act of His grace.[241] This is true both for His *avatāra* and *arcā* forms. In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* also it is stated that the Lord acquires that very form by which the devotee contemplates Him.[242] Grace is also in the form of acquiring the company of the Lord's ideal devotees by which bhakti is perfected in the heart. In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* Prahlāda realizes this when he gets Nārada's company.[234] It is also stated that by constantly thinking of the Lord in his mind or having the Lord's *bhāva* in his heart (*cintana* or *smaraṇa*) a devotee by His grace acquires freedom from worldly behaviour and Vedic ritualism (*karamamārga*) implying that grace is acquired by devotion rather than by rituals.[244] At another place it is said that for a person who does *karmayoga* and *sādhana bhakti*, as soon as he becomes free of all the attachments, he suddenly acquires pure jñāna and bhakti.[245] *Bhakti-mārga* is very conducive to grace. The Lord says that a person who is involved for ever in *bhakti* does not need jñāna and renunciation and is liberated by bhakti alone.[246] The results obtained by karma, austerity, jñāna, etc. are suddenly obtained by bhakti.[247] Those who take refuge at the Lord's feet attain everything suddenly by His grace.[248] *Parā bhakti* in which the Lord's form as Parabrahman is revealed to the devotee is also accessible by His grace.[249]

The concept of grace in disguise also occurs in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* which shows the limit of bhakti. When Nārada's mother dies of snake bite, he thinks that this is also a form of God's grace.[250]

Results of bhakti

Whatever the devotee desires, that he gets. As he worships so he gets the results.[251] The devotee even gets all the *devatās* to reside in his heart with all their qualities.[252] He gets all the glories of Vaikuṇṭha,[253] and even the *Paramapada* of the Lord.[254]

He gets detached[255] and is liberated from this world[256] and even from the cycle of births and deaths.[257] He gets mukti finally.[258] All the knots of ignorance are cut asunder.[259]

True bhakti liberates a person from the shackles of karman and even sins.[260] Even if the Lord's name is taken unconsciously it frees one from sins.[261] Even in the *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇā* it is said that devotion to Viṣṇu—*Vaiṣṇavī bhakti*—breaks the bondage of the devotee from all deeds (karmans) and is thus a very powerful armament.[262] It transforms demons like Vṛtrāsura into great people.[263]

Bhakti and heaven and mukti (liberation)

We have seen above that heaven and liberation are attained through bhakti, but the purāṇas agree in proclaiming that a true devotee does not care for heaven or even for mukti, he only wants bhakti in his heart forever. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* says that liberation is forever in his reach whose faith is firm in the Lord.[264] In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* Pṛthu does not want even liberation if he cannot hear the Lord's līlā and stories there. He only wants the service of the Lord for which he vies

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even with Lakṣmī.[265] It is said that heaven is not desirable which is devoid of the remembrance of the Lord's feet and from where after living a number of yugas a person has ultimately to come down to earth when the force of his good deeds is over.[266]

In the *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* it is stated very clearly that there are four types of muktis which give Hari's *sālokya*, *sārūpya*, *sāmīpya* and *nirvāṇa* but Hari's bhakti is greater than mukti which (mukti) is devoid of the service of the Lord. On the other hand, bhakti promotes service.[267] The *Padma Purāṇa* also says that when a person khows *bhakti rasa* he is not interested in mukti.[268]

Bhakti as the ultimate aim

The scholars of *bhakti śāstra* such as Madhusūdana Sarasvatī regard *parā bhakti* of the nature of *rasa* and acknowledge it as the *summum bonum* or the *parama puruṣārtha*. They say that other *puruṣārthas* are means to happiness only in a limited sense and bhakti only in the proper sense. God and God alone is the proper and natural object of the mind and hence of happiness and love (other objects being only the limited expressions of divine nature), we find that the basis of their theory was supported by the purāṇas. In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* it is stated that *atmavidyā*, *nyāya*, *daṇḍanīti*—all these are subjects of Veda but yet they are valuable only so far as they are helpful in attaining the surrender to the Lord,[269] and that bhakti is the highest thing to be attained.[270] Even the sense organs are useful so far as they promote devotion. If one does not listen to the Lord's story, one's ears are merely holes, one's tongue is like that of the frog's who never sings the lord's glory....[271]

Kaliyuga and bhakti

Bhakti is especially important in *Kaliyuga* as the result, which was obtained in other ages by great austerities, is obtained in *kaliyuga* only by taking the Lord's name, doing kīrtanas, etc. i.e. by bhakti. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* says that the reward which a man obtains in *kṛta yuga* by abstract meditation, in *tretā* by sacrifice, in *dvāpara* by adoration, that result is achieved in *Kaliyuga* merely by reciting the name of Keśava.[272] This point is elaborated further in the *Bhāgvata Purāṇa* and described in great detail.[273] In the *Padma Purāṇa* also the same view is seen.[274]

Eligibility in bhakti

Bhakti is said to override the distinction of caste, class, and sex. In the purāṇas this tendency of secularism reaches its peak. Though in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* it is stated that whereas the twice-born attain Hari with great pain, Śūdras attain Him only by serving the twice-born and women by their duties towards their husbands;[275] yet nowhere is it mentioned that the Śūdras and women are to worship Hari with utmost devotion and some distinction is maintained. In the *Harivaṁśa Purāṇa* Ghaṇṭākarṇa, the demon, is referred to as low by caste and also a *Bhagvad-bhakta*.[276] In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* an attempt was made to enlighten the lower castes and also women

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in reciting the Lord's name and kīrtanas. It is stated in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* that many women and Śūdras have been away from the kathā and kīrtana of the Lord and they should be given adequate facilities for this.[277] The Lord says that the ideal devotee looks upon Brāhmaṇa, Cāṇḍāla, etc. equally.[278] The Lord does not distinguish between the various castes.[279]

Women are seen to be eager to attain the knowledge of bhakti as Devahūti, Kapiladeva's mother.[280] In the *Padma Purāṇa* Pārvatī asks Śiva, 'Who are the *dāsas* and who are the Vaiṣṇavas? Who are the real Vaiṣṇava *bhaktas*?' Śiva answers that the Śūdras are *dāsas* and the Vaiṣṇavas are Nārada etc. Prahlāda, Ambarīṣa, etc. are the *bhaktas*. Blessed is *kaliyuga* in which even Śūdras if they meditate on Viṣṇu can become the Vaiṣṇava bhaktas.[281] It is also said that the Lord does not discriminate against any one—this is His grace. As the sun goes everywhere, even to a Cāṇḍāla's place, so does the Lord. Whoever has bhakti in his heart is a bhakta. He is not bound by his works in this.[282]

Rādhā

Any writing on bhakti would remain incomplete if the bhakti of Rādhā is not mentioned as it formed the heart of Vaiṣṇava bhakti later. Rādhā figures for the first time in the *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa*. Though the *Matsya Purāṇa* mentions Rādhā as a form of goddess worshipped at Vṛndāvana it does not speak of the romance of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.[283] The meaning of the word Rādhā is given in the *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa*—pronouncing the letter *Rā* the bhakta attains *mukti* and uttering the letter *dhā* he runs towards *Haripada*.[284] Rādhā resides in the very heart of Kṛṣṇa[285] Kṛṣṇa says that Rādhā is dearer to him than his own life,[286] that there is no difference between him and her as whitening is forever present in milk, so he is her,[287] that Rādhā is the form of all types of śaktis and he of all forms.[288] Rādhā is also called Lakṣmī, Śivā and Dhātrī and Sāvitrī.[289] Even Śiva says that Rādhā's story promotes great happiness and Kṛṣṇa bhakti.[290] *Mantra-tantra* are those which promote the bhakti of Rādhākṛṣṇa.[291]

This *Rādhā bhakti* developed so much with time that it formed the heart of Vaiṣṇavism and a separate sect later on.[292]

Other Mother Goddesses

Lakṣmī—In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* it is stated that she is the bride of Viṣṇu, mother of the world. He (Viṣṇu) is all pervading—she omnipresent. ...He is righteousness.... She devotion. ...He Śankara....She Gaurī. ...He Indra... She Indraṇī. ...He love.... She pleasure. ...He ...all that is called male. ...She all that is called female.[293] Lakṣmī was previously identified as the wife of Āditya but as Viṣṇu was also identified with Āditya she was worshipped as Viṣṇu's wife. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also says that whenever Viṣṇu takes an incarnation, she also comes with him.[294] She appeared first when the churning of the ocean for ambrosia took place and she

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chose the Lord Viṣṇu.[295] In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* she is called the knowledge of devotion, great knowledge and mystic knowledge.[296] It also says that her worship makes a person get all sorts of auspiciousness.[297] In the *Matsya Purāṇa* Viśākhīdvādaśī fast is recommended for auspiciousness and wealth in which Viṣṇu is worshipped with Lakṣmī.

Besides Lakṣmī, the female counterpart of Śiva also began to have a well developed mythology and was more connected with bhakti independently than being a mere counterpart of Śiva. Both her benefic and fierce forms were worshipped. Pārvati, Umā, Gaurī as the beneficient and Durgā, Kālī as fierce. This was prevalent in the epic period also but was more developed in the Pauraṇic period with a well developed Śāktism. The *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*[298] describes the Goddess as the source of all divine as well as cosmic evolution. She is also identified with Lakṣmī here. It is said that she takes the form of Lakṣmī, Mahākāli and Sarasvatī, according to her *rājasa*, *sāttvika* and *tāmasa* forms. While her original form is regarded as *nirguṇa*, she has the triple-stranded nature (*triguṇātmikā prakṛti*) as her body. She has the power to make even Nārāyaṇa succumb to sleep; by her desire Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa take human forms. She is the giver of happiness here and liberation hereafter.

Hence we see a true synthesis of all the goddesses in the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* as Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva were regarded as three forms of one God (trinity). Similarly, as the Devī began to have a separate independent worship and a tendency to identify all the various goddesses with one another became common.

The goddesses began to have more or less common features as Śāktism began to grow. The powers of veiling, setting, creating, illuding etc. were conferred on them. The Śaktis were said to be fond of flesh and wine,[299] having their abode in the mountains,[300] having lion as their vehicle.[301] Besides this the function of the devī seems to have been the killing demons e.g. Mahiṣāsura, Śumbha, Niśumba, Raktabīja, Madhu Kaiṭabha.[302] Because of this quality she was associated with victory even in the times of *Mahābhārata*.

Thus we have seen that a marked feature of Pauraṇic Śāktism was that Śakti was not connected with one particular god but with various gods. The *Vāyu* and *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇas* call her Mahendrī,[303] she is also called Vaiṣṇavī[304] and Māheśvarī.[305] We have already seen in the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* the synthesis of goddesses Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, and Mahākālī.

Of the other gods, one might mention the Sun. In the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* the Sun is worshipped in three forms—*ādhi-bhautika*—the physical sun, as the celestial being (*ādhidaivata*) and as the spirit (*ādhyatmika*). In the 104th chapter he is worshipped by Aditi who identifies him with Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Kubera etc.[306] Even in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* offering water to the Sun is considered necessary for all the householders. He is considered equal to Brahmā in light and Viṣṇu in power.[307]

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The *Matsya Purāṇa* says that immortality is obtained by worshipping him.[308] The *Matsya Purāṇa* also gives details of his temples, images and fasts.[309]

The *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is also very important regarding bhakti of Sun. It realates the story how Sāmba was cured of his leprosy by worshipping the Sun God.

Gaṇeśa

Though Gaṇeśa was mentioned as far back as *Taittiriya Āraṇyaka* as *Vakratuṇḍa* and *Dantin* and in *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra* as *Lambodara* and even in the *Mahābhārata* he is mentioned in the Anuśāsana parva etc. yet in the purāṇas detailed stories of his birth are given. According to the *Varāha Purāṇa* he came out of Śiva as his brilliance which emanated from him. According to one account of the *Skanda Purāṇa*, Pārvatī produced him from rubbing her body; according to another account with the impurities of her body mixed with the unguents to annoint herself. In the *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* a whole section is dedicated to Gaṇeśa. He became popular as he was the remover of obstacles and also on account of the influence of Śāktism of Gaṇapati, which was responsible for the construction of beautiful images of Gaṇeśa.[310]

Other important gods are Skanda, Gaṅgā, Pṛthvī, Tulasī, Sāvitrī etc. Vedic gods are also mentioned throughout but they are not important from the point of view of bhakti.

Evolution of Bhakti in the Purāṇas

If we regard the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* as the two limits within which the development of bhakti may be traced in the purāṇas, we can establish a parallel between the *Pāñcarātra Āgamas* and the *Āḻvārs* where a similar development from bhakti mixed with ritual to pure emotional bhakti, from loving worship to loving itself as worship, may be seen. While the realtionship between the *Āḻvārs* and the *Bhāgavata* remains uncertain—though the probability is that the *Bhāgavata* is by and large anterior to the *Āḻvārs*—there is doubt that the *Bhāgavata* is at once a śāstraic and poetic expression of the essential idea which moved the *Āḻvārs* and which they popularized. But for the firm and classic expression in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* the idea of bhakti as love would have lacked that authority which only śāstra can confer. The source of the medieval bhakti movement is thus above all in the *Bhāgavata* which became its primary scripture.

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For him the Puranic tradition has in contrast to the Vedic Brahmanical tradition, a genuine historical sense. cf. Pargiter, *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, pp. 15ff, 58ff. A quite different view has been expressed by Dr. P.L. Bhargava. See also, P.L. Bhargava, *India in the Vedic Age*, pp. 32-63.

2. While vedic literature mentions *Itihāsa-purāṇa* in a general way, the *Dharmasūtras* presuppose whole purāṇic works. Winternitz, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 518-19.
3. The chronology proposed by Hazra has been accepted in the *Classical Age*. Dr. V.S. Agrawal agrees in placing the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* in the 6th century A.D. cf. Hazra, *Studies in the Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, Pt. I, pp. 8-75; R.C. Majumdar, *The Classical Age*, p. 298; See also, S.N. Roy, *Pauraṇika Dharma Evam Samaja*.
4. Hazra, op. cit., p. 32; D. R. Patil discovers three chronological strata in the *Purāṇas*; cf. D. R. Patil, *Cultural History from the Vayu Purāṇa*, pp. 3-4.
5. Winternitz, op. cit., vol. I, p. 545; Hazra, op. cit., pp. 21-24.
6. Pargiter argues that it cannot be older than the 5th century A.D. cf. Pargiter, op. cit., p. 80.
7. Hazra, op. cit., p. 31; P. V. Kane has pointed to some striking agreements between the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya and the *Matsya Purāṇa* and has come to the conclusion that the passages of the *Matsya* are based on those of the *Arthaśāstra*. cf. P. V. Kane, "The Kauṭilya and the Matsya Purāṇa," *B.C. Law Commemoration Volume*, II, pp. 13-15; In the opinion of A. P. Karmarkar, the *Matsya Purāṇa* happens to be the earliest extant Purāṇa in Indian Literature; See, A. P. Karmarkar, *Karmarkar Commemoration Volume*, pp. 77-81.
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21. ibid., I. 21.46.
22. ibid., I. 25.15-26.
23. *Matsya Purāṇa*, Ch. 179.39; Ch. 183. 85.
24. ibid., Ch. 154, 347.
25. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, V. 33.47-48.
26. "*Yo viṣṇuḥ sa tuvai Rudro yo Rudraḥ sa pitāmahaḥ*
Eka mūrtistrayo devo Rudra-Viṣṇupitāmahaḥ."
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27. Madhūsudana Sarasvatī, *Bhagavadbhakti rasāyanam*, I, p. 26.
28. "*Viṣṇoḥ sakāśādudbhūtaṁ jagattatraiva ca sthitaṁ*
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56. Cf. Hazra, pp. 84 ff.
57. *MBH*, Nārāyaṇīya section, 339. 104.
58. *Vāyu Purāṇa*. II. 6. 66.
59. ibid., II. 36. 74.
60. ibid., II. 36, 88.
61. ibid., II. 36. 89.
62. ibid., II. 36. 90.
63. ibid., II. 36. 91.
64. ibid., II. 36. 92.
65. ibid., II. 36. 93.
66. ibid., II. 36. 104.
67. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. V. 17. 10.
68. ibid., IV. 15. 4.
69. ibid., III. 1. 42-43.
70. ibid., IV. 7. 35.
71. ibid., IV. 4. 87.
72. ibid., V. 2. 2.
73. ibid., IV. 24. 98.
74. *Matsya Purāṇa*, 285.6-7.
75. ibid., 54.15.
76. ibid., 47. 237.
77. *Bhāgvata Purāṇa*. 11.4.
78. (a) "*Etadartham tu lokeasminnavatāraḥ kṛto mayā, Yadesāmutpathasthānāṁ kāryā śāntirdurātmanāṁ*", *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, V. 7.9;
    (b) "*Kartuṁ dharma vyavasthānaṁ surāṇāṁ praṇāśanaṁ*", *Vāyu Purāṇa*. II. 34.232;
    (c) "*Kartuṁ dharmasya sansthānaṁ surāṇaṁ praṇaśanaṁ*", *Matsya Purāṇa*, 47.12;
    (d) *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. X. 16.50.
79. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, tr. by H.H. Wilson, pp.
80. *Matsya Purāṇa*. 150.180-81; According to S.N. Rai this shows Upaniṣadic influence. In the *Bṛhadārṇyaka Upaniṣad* it is stated that Indra influenced by his *māyā* takes many forms. "*Indro māyābhiḥ pururūpa īvate*", *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 2.5.19; cf. S.N. Rai, *Pauraṇik Dharma evam Samāja*.
81. *Matsya Purāṇa*. 47.1.

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82. "*Parpañcaṁ niṣprapañcoapi viḍambaysi bhūtale*
Prapanda janatānandasandohaṁ prathituṁ prabho", *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. X. 14.37.
83. "*Anugrahāya bhūtānāṁ mānuṣam dehamāsthitaṁ*
Bhajate tādṛśīḥ krīḍā yaḥ śrutvā tatparo bhavet", *Bhāgvata Purāṇa*. X. 33.37.
84. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. I. 17.33; I. 17.34; 1.18.
85. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. VII. 5.39-44.
86. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. V. 33.
87. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, I. 12.77; He gives boon to Prahlāda also for the same reason though he (Prahlāda) demands only his bhakti. See also *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, I.20.28.
88. "*Nijadhāman*", *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, IV. 9.19-25.
89. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. IV. 13.34; IV. 9.17. The Lord sometimes gives even small things; cf. ibid., V. 3.15.
90. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. VII. 10.11-14. Lord gives everything; cf. ibid., X. 48. 25-26.
91. "*Natathā me priyatama ātmayonirna śankaraḥ na ca*
Saṁkarṣaṇo na śrīrnaivātmāca yathā bhavān",
ibid., XI. 14.15; See also, ibid., IX. 4.64.
92. "*Nirapekṣaṁ muṇim śāṇtaṁ nirvairaṁ samadarśanaṁ*
Anuvrajāmyhaṁ nityaṁ puśyetyanghriveṇubhiḥ", ibid., XI. 14.15.
93. ibid., IX. 4.63.
94. "*Mayi nirbaddhahṛdayaḥ sādhanaḥ samadarśanaḥ*
Vaśi kurvanti mama bhaktyā satstriyaḥ satpatiṁ yathā", *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, IX. 4.66.
95. ibid., X. 14.3; That he is under his bhakta is also seen in *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, IV. 31. 19-22; ibid., XI. 29.3-6.
96. ibid., IX. 27.17; ibid., XI. 27.18.
97. ibid., XI. 14.21.
98. ibid., XI. 20.31 and ibid., XI. 20.37.
99. ibid., XI. 14.13; ibid., X. 14.37.
100. "*Kāmaṁ krodhaṁ bhayaṁ snehamaikyaṁ sauhṛdameva ca*
Nityaṁ harau vidadhato yānti tanmayatāṁ he te", ibid., X. 29.15.
101. ibid., X. 80. 18-21.
102. ibid., X. 81.3-11.
103. ibid., X. 6.39; *Ibid.*, X. 8 (God's *līlā* as a child); ibid., IV. 20. 20.
104. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, X. 87.16; also ibid., VI. 2.13-17; ibid., VI. 1, 15-16, 18-19; even by taking his name unconsciously one is freed from sins. See also ibid., VI. 2.19.
105. ibid., VI. 16.34.
106. "*Nāhaṁ tu sakhyo bhajatoapi jantūn bhajāmyamī-*
śāmanuvṛttivṛttaye yathādhno labdha-dhane vinaṣṭe
taccintayānyannibhṛto na veda", ibid., X. 32.20-21.
107. ibid., X. 88.8-10.
108. ibid., X. 88.11.
109. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, VI. 7.27-45.

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110. "*Nātha yoni-sahasreṣu yeṣu yeṣu vrajāmayahaṁ yeṣu tevṣacyuta bhaktiracyutastu sadā tvayi*", ibid., I. 20.18; "*Yā prītiravivekānāṁ viṣayeṣvanapāyinī tvāmanusmarataḥ sā me hṛdayānmā-pasarpatu*", ibid., I. 20.19.
111. *Harivaṁśa Purāṇa*, Bhaviṣyat parvan, 80.63.
112. "*Sukhe dukhe ca rāge ca bhojane gamane tathā,*
Jāgratsvapneṣu sarvatra tvayyeva ramataṁ mahata.
Mahākāma devadeveśa namastastu Janārdanaḥ".
ibid., Bhaviṣyat parvan, 80, 80-81. She also, ibid., 90, 60-64; ibid., 82.27.
113. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, XI. 14.14; The bhakta does not want any attachment with the worldly things, cf. ibid., XI, 27.35; VII. 9.39-41; Prahalāda says to the Lord, cf. ibid., VII. 10.2; ibid., X. 14.35; The bhakta does not even want *mokṣa*. cf. ibid., X. 87.21; ibid., VI. 24.57.
114. ibid., IV., 9.27.
115. "*Bhavacchddamayaccheham bhavam bhāgya vivarjitah*".
ibid., IV. 9.34.
116. ibid., IV. 12.8.
117. ibid., IV. 24.58; ibid., IV. 30. 27-37.
118. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, X. 47, 66-67; ibid., VII. 9.17; ibid., VI. 2.24-27; ibid., VII. 10.4-6.
119. ibid., X. 29.15.
120. God having his food among the *gopas*; ibid., X. 13.11.
121. ibid., X. 8.
122. ibid., X. 22.
123. ibid., X. 29.5-10.
124. ibid., X. 29. 30-41.
125. Madhusūdana Sarasvatī calls the bhakti of Śuka etc., *Sādhana-rūpā* while that of the *gopis* as *svataḥ siddhā*, cf. *Bhagavadbhakti rasāyanam*, I, pp. 24, 66; II, vs. 13, p. 157.
126 "*Gopīnāṁ paramānanda āsīdgovinda-darśane kṣaṇaṁ*
Yugasatamiva tāsāmyena vinā abhavat", *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, X. 19.16.
127. ibid., X. 39.17-37 (when Akrūra comes to take Kṛṣṇa to Mathurā). ibid., X. 46.4-6; ibid., X. 47.9-21.
128. "*Sarvātmā-bhāvodhigato bhavatīnāmadhokṣaje*
Viraheṇa mahābhāga mahān me anugrahaḥ kṛtaḥ',,
ibid., X. 47.27.
129. ibid., X. 48.25,
130. ibid., XI. 29.40; ibid., XI. 19.8-10. The most famous example is the story of *Gajendra* when he was troubled by the crocodile. He asked for the lord's help and was awed. cf. ibid., VIII. 3. 2-9. See also ibid., VIII. 24.28.
131. Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, "*Bhagavadbhakti rasāyanam*", II, vs. 23-24, pp.166-67.
132. ibid., I, vs. 8, pp. 38-40.
He quotes the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*—
"*Sarvabhūteṣu yaḥ paśyedbhagavad-bhāvamātmnaḥ*
Bhūtani bhagavatyātmanyeṣa bhagavattottamaḥ", *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, XI. 2.45.

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133. "*Evaṁ sancintayaṁ viṣṇumabhedanātmano dvija*
Tanmayatvamavapyāgryaṁ mene cātmānamacyutam", *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, I. 20.1.
134. Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, *Bhagavadbhakti rasāyanam.*
135. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, XI. 14.23.
136. "*Kathaṁ vinā romaharṣan dravantā cetasā vinā,*
Vinā ānandāśrukalaya śuddheyed bhaktyā vinā aśayah.
Vaggadgada dravate yasya cittaṁ
rudatyabhikṣaṇaṁ hasati kyacicca
Vilajja udqāyati nṛtyate ca
madbhaktiyukto bhuvanaṁ punāti".
ibid., XI. 14. 23-24. See also, ibid., VII. 7. 34-36; Prahalāda shows all these signs in ecstacy and trance. cf. ibid., VII. 4. 37-47.
137. ibid., IV. 12.18.
138. ibid., XII. 10.9
139. "*Spṛhyatīrvayamivabhupuṇyah premavepitabhujaḥ stimitāpaḥ*", ibid., X. 35.7.
140. ibid., XII. 27.44.
141. ibid., X. 30.14-23. Prahlāda enacts his līlās. ibid., VII. 4.40.
142. *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa*. IV. 66.36.
143. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. XI. 29.19; ibid., X. 80. 2-4.
144. ibid., IV, 20, 27-28.
145. *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa*. II, 58. 33.
146. ibid., II, 58. 36.
147. ibid., II, 58. 30.
148. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, III. 7, 20-25.
149. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, XI. 11, 29-33.
150. ibid., XI, 20, 8.
151. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, II, 3, 11-12.
152. ibid., VI, 15, 18-19.
153. ibid., VI, 17, 27-31; ibid., VI, 17, 34-35; ibid., VI, 17, 37.
154. ibid., VII, 10, 19-21.
155. ibid., VII, 9, 43-44.
156. Hari's *bhaktas* live for a long time, take births willingly and tell Hari's story to people, purify the *tīrthas*. "*Kṛṣṇena-Pārvatyai nija-rūpa-darśanaṁ*', cf. *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa*, Gaṇapati khaṇḍa, ch. 66-68.
157. "*Abhisandhāya yo himsāṁ dambhaṁ Mātsaryameva vā*
samrambhī bhinnadṛgbhāvaṁ mavi kuryātsa tāmasaḥ. (8)
Visayānabhisandhāya yaśa aiśvaryamameva vā
Arcādāvarcayedyo māṁ pṛthagbhāvaḥ sa rājasaḥ. (9)
Karmanirhārmuddiśya parasmin vā tadarpaṇaṁ
Yajedyaṣṭavyamiti vā pṛthagbhāvaḥ sa sāttvikaḥ". (10)
Bhāgavata Purāṇa, III, 29, 8-10.
158. "*Sarvabhūteṣu yaḥ paśyed bhagavadbhāvamātmanaḥ*
Bhūtāni bhagavatātmanyeṣa bhāgavatottamaḥ".
ibid., XI, 2, 45.
159. "*Gṛhītvāpīndriyairarthān vo na dveṣṭi na hṛṣyati*
Viṣṇormāyāmidaṁ paśyan sa vai bhāgavatottamaḥ".
ibid., XI, 2, 48.

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160. ibid., XI, 2, 49-55: See also ibid., III, 29, 13-14 for *niṣkāma bhakta.*
161. ibid., XI, 2, 55.
162. "*Ata eva vasyaikadā drute citte bhagavadākāratā*
praviṣṭā, sa sarvadā tadbāvatah kṛtakṛtyo bhavatītyuktam",
Madhusudana Sarasvati "*Bhagavad bhaktirasayanam*", 3rd Bhumika.
163. "*Īśvare tadādhīneṣu bāliśeṣu dviṣatsu ca*
Premamaitrīkṛpopekṣā yaḥ karoti sa madhyamaḥ", *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* XI, 2, 46.
164. "*Arcāyāmeva haraye pujām yah sraddhayehate*
Na tadbhaktesu canyesu sa bhaktah prākrtah smrtah", ibid., XI, 2, 47.
165. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, IV, 15; See also, ibid., IV, 15, 17.
166. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, VII, 1, 26; ibid., VII, 1, 28; ibid., VII, 10, 40.
167. *Bhagavadbhakti rasāyanam*, 2nd ullasa, 10th Bhumika, 29.30 karikas.
168. "*Ārādhyamāsa vibhuṁ.... bhaktitaḥ*", *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, III, 18, 55.
169. "*Nātha yonisahasreṣu yeṣu yeṣu vrajāmyahaṁ*
Teṣu teṣvacyutā bhaktiracyutāstu sadā tvayi", ibid., I, 20, 18.
170. "*...Bhaktyā tuṣyati keśavaḥ*", *Matsya Purāṇa*, 100, 36.
171. *Matsya Purāṇa*, 54, 25; ibid., 81, 26; ibid., 80, 93.
172. ibid., 47, 168.
173. "*Devānāṁ guṇalingānāmānuśrāvikakarmanāṁ*
Sattva evaikamanaso vṛttih svābhavikī tu yā. (32)
Animittā bhagavati bhaktiḥ siddhergarīyasī
Jarayatyāsu yā kośam nigīrnamanalo yathā", (33)
cf. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, III, 25, 32-33.
174. "*Manogatiravicchinnā...lakṣaṇam bhaktiyogasya*
nirguṇasya...ahaitukyavyavahitā yā bhaktiḥ puruṣottame". ibid., V, 11-12.
175. ibid., V, 13; I, 32-34.
176. "*...Tad Brahmanirvāṇasukhaṁ vidurbudhāstato bhajadhvaṁ hṛdaye hṛdiśvaraṁ*",
Bhāgavata Purāṇa, VII, 7, 37.
177. See *Infra*, pp. 317-320.
178. "*Iti pumsārpita Viṣṇu bhaktiścennavalakṣaṇaṁ*
Kṛyate bhagavatayadhā tanmanyeadhitamuttanaṁ".
Bhāgavata Purāṇa, VII, 5, 24.
179. "*Śrvaṇamkīrtanaṁ viṣṇoh smaraṇaṁ pādasevanaṁ*
Arcanaṁ vandanaṃ dāsyaṁ sakhyamātmanivedanaṁ".
ibid., VII, 5, 23.
180. "*Itthaṁ parasya nijavartmar irakṣayāthā-*
lilātanostadanurūpavidambanāni
Karmāṇi karmakaśanāni yadottamasya
Śrūyadmuṣya padayoranuvṛttimicchan". ibid., X, 90, 49.
181. "*Saṅkīrtyamāno bhagavānanantaḥ*
Śrutānubhāvo vyasanaṁ hi pumsāṁ
Praviśya cittaṁ vidhunotyasesam
Yathā tamorkobhramivāti vātaḥ". ibid., XII. 12, 47.
182. ibid., XII, 12, 48-51.
183. "*Avismṛtiṁ kṛṣṇapadāravindayoḥ*
Kṣiṇotyabhadṛāṇi samaṁ tanoti ca

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Tattvasya śuddhiṁ paramātmabhaktiṁ
Jñānaṁ ca vijñānavirāga yuktaṁ".
ibid., XI, 12, 54; See also, ibid., XI, 12, 53.

184. "*Smarataḥ pāda-kamalamātmānamapiyacchati*
Kinnvarthakāmān bhajato nātyabhīṣṭājjagadguruḥ".
ibid., X, 80, 11.

185. "*Evaṁ kriyāyogapathaiḥ pumān vaidikatāntrikaiḥ*
Arcānnubhayatassiddhiṁ matto vindatyabhīpsitām".
ibid., XI: 27, 49.

186. "*Aho praṇamāya kṛtassamuddyamaḥ prapannabhaktārthavidhau*
samāhitaḥ yallokapālaistvadanugrahomerairalabdhapūrvopasadesurerpitaḥ".
ibid., VIII. 23, 2.

187. "*Yannāmaśrutimātreṇa pumān bhavati nirmalaḥ*
Tasya tīrthapadaḥ kim vā dāsānāmavaśiṣyate".
ibid., IX, 5, 16.

188. ibid., IV, 20, 19-31; See also, IV, 20, 27-28.

189. "*Aho bhāgyamaho bhāgyaṁ nandagopavrajaukasāṁ*
Yanmitraṁ paramānandaṁ pūrṇaṁ brahma sanātanaṁ',,
ibid., X, 14, 32.

190. ibid., I, 15.

191. ibid., III, 2.

192. "*Martyo yadā tyaktasamastakarmā niveditātmā vicikīrṣito me*
Tadā amṛtatvampratipadyamāno mayāatmabhūyāya ca kalpate vai",
ibid., XI, 29, 24.

193. ibid., XI, 19, 9-10.

194. ibid., XI, 3, 31.

195. "*Kvacidrudantyacyutacintayā kvacidvasanti nandanti vedantyalaukikāḥ*
Nṛtyanti gāyantyanuśīlayantyajaṁ bhavanti tūṣṇīm parāmetya nirvṛtāḥ",
ibid., XI, 3, 32.

196. *Evaṁ nirjita ṣaḍvargaih kṛyate bhaktirīśvare*
Vāsudeve bhagavati yayā samlabhate ratiṁ", ibid., VII, 7, 33.

197. "*Tadā pumānmukta-samasta-bandhanastabhāva bhāvānukṛtāśayākṛtiḥ*
Nirdagdhabījānuśayo mahīyasā bhaktiprayogeṇa sametyadhokṣajaṁ",
ibid., VII,7, 36.

198. ibid., XI, 11, 22. other examples of desireless action. ibid., XI, 20, 10; XI, 29, 9; IX, 4, 21; III, 29, 33; IV, 20, 9-10; VI, 16, 34; VII, 7, 48; etc.

199. See Chapters—Introduction and Bhakti in the *Gītā*.

200. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, XI, 20.

201. Siddhesvara Bhattacharya, op. cit., vol. I, p. xv.

202. "*Tāvat karmāṇi kurvita na nirvidyyeta yāvata*
Matkathāśravaṇādau yā śraddhā yāvanna jāyate", *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, XI, 20, 9.

203. ibid., XI, 20, 7.

204. That the Lord is speaking not of the dry knowledge which leads only to *Tattvajñāna* or theoretical knowledge only, but the knowledge which leads to God realization is known when he says at the end of the chapter that those who follow the path of jñāna, bhakti and karma reach his ultimate *dhāma*.

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Here the Lord is speaking of knowledge as a path to the ultimate love of God (*parābhakti*).

205. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, XI 20, 8.

206. ibid., XI, 20, 27-28.

207. ibid., XI, 20, 29.

208. ibid., XI, 20, 11.

209. "*Tasmādmadbhakti-yuktasya yogino vai madātmanaḥ*
Na Jñānam na ca vairāgyaṁ prāyaḥ śreyo bhavediha", ibid., XI, 20, 31.

210. "*Yat karmabhiryattapasā jñanavairāgyataśca yat*
Yogena dāna-dharmeṇa śreyobhiritayairapi" (32)
Sarvaṁ madbhakti-yogena madbhakto labhate añjasā
Svargāpavargaṁ madhāma kathamoidyadi vāñcchati", (33) ibid., XI, 20, 32-33: See also, ibid., X, 87, 40.

211. References where *guṇa-līlā-śravaṇa*, kīrtana etc., are said to be the means of bhakti. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, XI, 19, 20; *guṇa-śravaṇa*, ibid., III, 9. 11: looking and touching the Lord's image and worshipping it or *arcana*, ibid., III, 29, 15-19; listening and telling his *kathā* or story, ibid., IV, 29, 38-40; hearing his glory, ibid., VI, 2, 25; *śravaṇa kīrtana*, ibid., VI, 3, 32; *śravaṇa*, ibid., VII, 1, 7; worshipping the Lord's image, concentrating on his feet (*pāda-sevana*), faith in his story, *ātmanivedana*, ibid., VII, 7, 30-31; six ways of the Lord's service to attain bhakti; bowing down, *vandana*, *ātmanivedana* or surrender, service or *pāda sevā*, concentrating on his feet, hearing his līlā and story, ibid., VII, 9, 50.

It is said that after worshipping the Lord thus—one becomes so engrossed in the Lord that he does not even remember his regular worship (pūjā). ibid., v. 8. 11-12.

212. One should be detached, *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, XI, 3, 23: should crave the company of other devotees, ibid., XI, 12, 1-3; ibid., VII, 9, 18; should conquer the six enemies within *kāma*, *krodha* etc. ibid., VII, 7, 33; should never insult others, ibid., III, 29, 24-27; ibid., III, 29, 15-29; kindness towards all beings, ibid., III, 9, 12 and several other qualities which the ideal bhakta has.

213. ibid., XI, 3, 22; VII, 7, 30-31.

214. ibid., XI, 19, 22-23.

215. ibid., II, 9, 22-23.

216. ibid., IV, II, 28-29.

217. ibid., IV, 8, 45-52.

218. "*Prathamammahatāṁ sevā, taddayā-pātratā tataḥ*
Śraddhā atha teṣaṁ dharmeṣu, tato Hariguṇa-śrutiḥ
Tato ratyankurotpattiḥ, svarūpādhi gatis tataḥ.
Premavṛddhih parānande, tasyāthasphuraṇam
Bhagavaddharmaniṣṭhā, atasyasminstadguṇaśālitā
Premṇoatha parama kāṣṭhetyuditā bhakti-bhūmikāḥ"
Madhusudāna Sarasvatī, *Bhagavadbhakti rasāyanaṁ*, I ullāsa, vs. 34-36; cf. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. 1, 5, 23-39.

219. ibid., XI, 19, 19-24.

220. "*Vaidikastāntriko miśra itīme trividhomakhāḥ*
Trayānāmīpsiteneva vidhina māṁ samarcayeta",
ibid., XI, 27, 7.

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221. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, I, II, 53-56.
222. *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 372, pp. 542-43.
223. ibid., ch. 373, pp. 543-44
224. ibid., ch. 373. pp. 545-46.
225. ibid., ch. 375, pp. 546-47.
226. *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa*' I, 26, 89.
227. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, XI, 14, 32-46; See also II, 2, 8-31; III. 28.
228. For *Pratimā lakṣaṇas* in the *Purāṇas* see the Chapter "Bhakti in Relation to Art".
229. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, XI, 27, 19-29, See also, IV, 8, 53-61.
230. ibid., XI, 27, 30-35.
231. ibid., III, 29, 21-22; III, 29, 24-27.
232. *Haripūjāvidhi-varṇanaṁ*, *Padma Purāṇa*, V. 80.
233. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, I, 6, 30-31.
234. *Vāyu Purāṇa*, X, 86.
235. *Matsya Purāṇa*, 7, 33.
236. "*Bhaktir mūlaṁ ca pūjane*," *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa*, I, 26, 89.
237. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, XI, 5, 6; XI, 5, 8; XI 5, 10.
238. ibid., VIII, 5, 30.
239. For grace in the *Upaniṣads* see the chapter "Bhakti in the Vedas and Upanisads"—subheading "Concept of grace", for "Grace in the *Gītā* and epics see the chapters "Bhakti in *Gītā* and Epics"
240. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, X, 14, 20.
241. "*Svayaṁ pumāṅśca prakṛtiḥ svayaṁ ca prakṛteḥ paraḥ*
Rūpaṁ vidhattearūpaśca bhaktanugrahahetave",
Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa II, 34, 29.
242. "*Tvaṁ bhāvayogaparibhāvitahṛtsaroja*
Āsse śrutekṣitapatho nanu nātha puṁsāṁ
Yadyadhiyā ta urugāya vibhāvayanti
Tattadvapuḥ praṇayase sadanugrahāya", *Bhāgavata Purāna*, III, 9, 11.
243. ibid., VII, 9, 27.
244. "*Yadāyamanugṛhānati bhagavānātma-bhavitaḥ*
Sa jahāti matiṁ loke vede ca pariniṣṭhitāṁ", ibid., IV, 29, 42-46.
245. ibid., XI, 20, 11.
246. ibid., XI, 20, 31.
247. ibid., XI, 20, 32-33.
248. ibid., XI, 29, 3.
249. "*Madīya-mahimānaṁ ca param brahmeti śabditaṁ*
Vetsyasyānugṛhītaṁ me sam praśnairvivṛtam hṛdi", ibid., VIII, 24, 38.
250. "*Tadā tadahamīśasya bhaktānāṁ samabhīpsataḥ*
Anugrahaṁ manyamānaḥ prātistham disamuttarāṁ", ibid., I, 6, 10.
251. ibid., IV, 13, 34; The Lord says that the sight of him is never unproductive. In the *Viṣṇu purāṇa*, Śiva is seen to be granting boons whenever the devotee prays with the slightest awakening of bhakti. cf. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, I, 12, 77; See also, *Harivamśa*, *Purāṇa*, Viṣṇu parva, 126, 162.
252. Ibid., V, 18, 12.

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253. ibid., III, 25, 37.
254. ibid., III, 25, 36.
255. ibid., III, 27, 5.
256. ibid., III, 25, 38.
257. ibid., IV, 29, 36-37.
258. ibid., III, 33, 22; The purāṇas also refer to various types of muktis. The *Matsya Purāṇa* refers to *salokya liberation*. cf. *Matsya Purāṇa*, 90, 9, *nitya sāmipya*, 179, 40; Śiva pleased with Andhaka granted this; *samānarūpa* i.e., *sārupya*, 274, 78: whoever performs *tulāpuruṣadāna*, recites, remembers the Lord's name and gets it; *sāyujya*, 9, 29; Gods and Manus who perish after every thousand *yugas* obtain this; *krama mukti*, 94, 9; 86, 6; *paragati* is obtained after residence in a particular region for a particular period. *Sādhana mukti*, 42, 17—as achieved by Yayāti. *Parabrahma* attainment 61, 66; 170, 3; *parampada* 92, 13; those who are freed from sins get it and even perpetration of bad deeds does not exclude from getting the *paramagati*, 104, 14.
259. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, IV, 11, 28-30—Svāyambhuva Manu tells Dhruva to search the Lord within his heart by firm bhakti as all the knots of *avidyā* will be cut asunder.
260. From shackles of *karman*, *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, XI, 20, 9. From sins, ibid., XI, 4, 42; XI, 20, 9. In the case of Ajāmila the taking of the Lords name itself liberated him from sins, ibid., VI, 2, 13-17; See also, VI, 2, 11-12, VI, 1, 15; VI, 3, 31.
261. ibid., VI, 2, 19.
262. "*Surathasya vaiśya samādheśca vivaranaṁ*"
"*Svakarmabandhanaṁ chettuṁ vaiṣṇayāṇāṁ ca vaiṣṇavī*
Tīkṣṇā śāstrasvarūpāsā kṛṣṇasya paramātmanaḥ."
Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa, Prakṛti khaṇḍa, II, 62, 30.
263. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, VI, 12, 19-22.
264. ibid., I, 20, 27.
265. ibid., IV, 20, 24-31.
266. ibid., V, 19, 22-23.
267. Yama to Sāvitrī—*Śrīkṛṣṇagunakīrtanaṁ*
"*Muktayaśca caturvedairniruktaścacaturvidhāḥ*—74
Tatpradhānā Harerbhaktirmukterapi garīyasī
Sālokyadā Harerekā cānyā sārūpyadā parā—75
Sāmīlpadācanirvāṇadātrī caivamiti smṛtiḥ
Bhaktāstannābhivāncchanti vinātatsevanādikaṁ—76
Divyarūpadharaṇanca nirvāṇa mokṣadaṁ viduḥ
Muktiścaśiva-rahitā bhaktihs śiva-vivardhinī"—77
cf. *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa*, Prakṛti khaṇḍa, II, 34, 74-78. See also, Vaiṣṇavas always prefer Hari's bhakti to mukti—
"*Hari-bhakti-svarupāncamuktīm vāñcchanti vaiṣṇavāḥ*
Anyenirvāṇarupānccamuktimicchanti sādhavah"
ibid., II, 25, 11.
268. "*Yadā bhaktiraso jñāto na muktī rocate tadā*," *Padma Purāṇa*, VI, 131, 89.
269. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, VII, 6, 26.
270. ibid., III, 25, 44.
271. ibid., II, 3, 20-25.

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272. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, VI, 2, 19-23; See also, VI, 2, 15-16.
273. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, XI, 5, 32-34; XI, 5, 36; XI, 5, 39-40; XI, 6, 24; XII, 3, 51-52.
274. *Padma Purāṇa*, III, 61, 4-68.
275. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, VI, 2, 19-23; and VI, 2, 25-29.
276. "*Iti bruvan ghoratamo jātyā hīno na cittataḥ*
Piśāco bhagavadbhaktaḥ samādhiṁ samapādyat."
Harivaṁśa Purāṇa, Bhaviṣyat Parva, 80, 82.
277. "*Dūre harikathāh kecid dūrecācyuta kīrtanāh*
Striyāh sūdrādayascaiva te anukampyā bhavādrsām."
Bhāgavata Purāṇa, XI, 5, 4.
278. ibid., XI, 29, 13-14.
279. ibid., VII, 9, 27; VI, 16, 44.
280. ibid., III, 25, 28-30.
281. "*Śūdrā bhavanti vai dāsā vaiṣṇavā nāradādayaḥ*
Prahlādaścambarīṣādyā bhaktāstu nāganandinī—29
Brahmakriyārato nityaṁ vedavedāṅga-pāṭhakāḥ
Sankhacakr-ānkito yastu sa vai vaisnava ucyate
Dvijasevārato nityam nityam viṣnu-pūjakah
Srnotibahudhā caiva purānam vedasammitam—31
Sa Sūdra Haridāsastu Ityukto nāganandini,
Pancavarsatvanāsrtya krtā bhaktiranekadhā—32
Sa vai bhaktā iti proktah sarvasādhusu sammatah
Dhruvādayastu vijneyā ambarīsādayasca ye—33
Bhaktāsca munibhih proktāh saryokalesu bhāmini
Kalau dhanyatamā sūdrā visṇudhyāna-parāyanāh—34
Iha loke sukham bhuktvā yānti visnum sanātanam
Sankhacakrānkito yastu viṣṇu-bhakti-prakārakah—35
Caturvidhmahotsāhah kartā caiva visesatah
Sa sūdro viṣṇudāsastu yathā drstam yathā srutam—36
cf. *Padma Purāṇa*, VI, 82, 29-36.
282. "*Nīre nīram yathā ksiptam dugdhe dugdham ghrte ghrtam*
Tadvadbhedam na pasyanti viṣṇu-bhakti-prasādaṭah
Bhānuh sarvagato yadvadvahnih sarvagato yathā
Bhaktih sthitastathā bhaktah karmabhirnaiva badhyate."
ibid., VI, 131, 41-42.
283. *Matsya Purāṇa*, 13, 38; See also, S. G. Kantawala, *Cultural History from the Matsya Purāṇa*, p. 410.
284. *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa*, II, 48, 40-42.
285. "*Svayam Rādhā kṛṣṇa-patnī Kṛṣṇavaksah-sthala-sthitā*
Prānādhisthātrdevīcatasyaiva Paramātmanah."
ibid., II, 48, 42.
286. "*Tvamev-a prānādhipā rādhe preyasī ca varānane.*" ibid., IV, 15, 57.
287. "*Yathā tvanca tathaahanca bhedohināvayordhruvam*
Yathā ksīre ca dhāvalyaṁ yathāgnau dāhikā satī." ibid., IV, 15, 58.
288. "*Sarvaśakti-svarūpāsī sarva-rūpoahamaksara-h*
Yadātejah svarūpohaṁ tejorupāsi tvaṁ tadā." ibid., IV, 15, 64.
289. ibid., IV, 67, 64.

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290. ibid., II, 48, 21.

291. ibid., IV, 121, 14.

292. Later on Rādhā was conceived as the *antaraṅga-śakti* of Kṛṣṇa. The relation of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā is known as the principle of difference and non-difference in Vaiṣṇava philosophy—non-difference because Rādhā is eternally identified with Kṛṣṇa and difference because of her being essentially attributive of Kṛṣṇa. According to *Ujjavala Nilamaṇi* of Rūpa Goswami, *Mahābhāva* prevails in Rādhā only. This *mahābhāva* is the substance of *hlādini śakti*.

According to Jogesh Chandra Roy and A. K. Majumdar, Rādhā originally was a synonym of Viśākha (*Atharvaveda*, S. Av. XIX. 7). Even in later literature Viśākha is one of the close friends of Rādhā. Jogesh Chandra Roy, "*Vrajer Kṛṣṇa ke o kahe chilen.*" *Bhāratvarṣa* (Bengali) B.S. 1340 (Magha); Dr. Ashok Kumar Majumdar, "A note on the development of Radha Cult," *A.B.O.R.I.*, Vol. XXXVI, Paris, III-IV, pp. 231-257, 1956.

Rasik Bihari Joshi says that the earliest reference to Rādhā alongwith Srī Kṛṣṇa is found in the Prākṛta work *Gāthā Sapta Śatī* A.D. 1-2 Cen. "O Kṛṣṇa by the breath of your mouth please remove the dust particles adhering to the cheeks of Radhika". cf. Hāla, *Gāthā Sapta Śatī*, 1, 89; See also, Rasik Bihari Joshi, "The philosophic and the historical background of the conception of Rādhā", *Proceedings and transactions of the All India Oriental Conference*, (19th Session, December, 1957, Pt. II).

Regarding the sculptural evidence of Kṛṣṇa worship no image is found before 200 B.C. Some of the early sculptures depicting Kṛṣṇa's story belong to A.D. 400-500 e.g., the Mandasore Pillar. Though Rasik Bihari Joshi points out that the study of late works as *Prem Vilāsa* and *Bhakti Ratnākar* point out that Rādhā was not worshipped in Vṛandābana with Kṛṣṇa when Jāhnvī, the second wife of Nityanand Prahu went there and then she established the image of Rādhā there. Rādhā is not mentioned in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. There is quite a controversy among scholars regarding this fact. Rasik Bihari Joshi believes that Rādhā is indirectly referred to in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. He quotes the lines: *nirasta samyātiśayena rādhasā svadhāmane brahmaṇi ramsyati namaḥ*". (*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, II, 4, 14), and says that the word *Rādhasā* includes the word *Rādhā* which is derived from the root rādh. This is clearly far fetched.

Ashok Kumar Majumdar opines that the absence of Rādhā in the *Bhāgavata* means that either the author did not knew of Rādhā or he was aware of her but ignored her name because he was opposed to the Rādhā cult and did not want to give importance to her and to any other *gopī*. Quoting *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, the author says that the lesson of the story is that "The *gopīs* are not elevated above the other women of the world, secondly, amongst the *gopīs* there is no difference as to rank". Ashok Kumar Majumdar, "A note on the Development of Radha Cult", *A.B.O.R.I.*, Vol. XXXVI. pp. 231-57. cf. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, X, 29, vs. 47 ff; 30, vs. 36 ff; 33, vs. 28 ff.

293. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, I, 8, 17-35.

294. ibid., I, 9, 144-45.

295. ibid., I, 9, 106; *Brahmaṇḍa Purāṇa*, IV, 10, 82; *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, VIII, 8, 8-28.

296. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, I, Ch. IX.

297. ibid., I, 9, 146.

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298. The famous *Durgāsaptasatī* is a part of the *Mārkaṅdeya Purāṇa*. It is the best known account of the birth and deeds of the Great Goddess with her three Forms. It is used in daily worship all over India.
299. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, V, 1, 85; *Brahmaṇḍa Purāṇa*, IV, 7, 76; IV, 33, 4.
300. *Matsya Purāṇa*, 157, 17.
301. ibid., 157, 16-17; *Vayu Purāṇa*, 9, 84; *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, IV, 16, 9.
302. *Markandeya Purāṇa. Chandimāhātmya*; in the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* she kills Bhandasura. IV, 12, 41-74; IV, 13, 32; In the *Matsya Purāṇa* Suskarivati kills demons. 179, 36.
303. *Vāyu Purāṇa*, 98, 8; *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, III, 73, 8.
304. *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, IV, 36, 58.
305. *Matsya Purāṇa*, 179, 82.
306. "*Tapasi pacasi Visnam pasi bhasmi karoti*
Prakatayasi mayu khairthadayasvambugamaih
Srjasi kamalajanma palayasyacyuta khyat
Ksapayesi ca yuganti rudrarupa stvamena". *Mārkandeya Purāṇa*, Ch. 104.
307. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, 3, 11, 39-40.
308. *Matsya Purāṇa*, 184, 13.
309. *Matsya Purāṇa*, 11, 31-32, etc. For details of his iconography in the purāṇas see the chapter "Bhakti in Relation to Art".
310. See the chapter "Bhakti in Relation to Art".

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9

Contribution of Sankara and Ramanuja

SANKARA's age was a period of great spiritual crisis in India. The intellectuals were caught between Buddhist dialectic and atheism on one hand and Mīmāmsā formalism and ritualism on the other, while the masses were caught by the gorgeous ceremonial and mythic lore of the Hindu Purāṇas or the equally 'paurāṇic' Mahāyāna sūtras, image worship and Tantricism of the Buddhists. In the south the *Āḷvārs* and *Nāyanārs* had, in fact, protested against intellectualism and formalism and preached a religion of the heart.[1] There was a danger of people slipping into atheistic intellectualism or merely pious sentimentalism. In particular, paurānic and tāntric literature had encouraged the establishment of numerous sects and temples which threatened to engulf the whole society in a veritable polytheism and ritualism. Śaṅkara provided a new spiritual insight and direction in this atmosphere and reaffirmed the truth of spiritual unity.

Śaṅkara's biographical accounts were compiled by his disciples the chief of which are Mādhava's *Śaṅkaradigvijaya* and Ānandagiri's *Śaṅkaravijaya*. Besides these, Cidvilāsa and Sadānanda also wrote some accounts. *Skanda Purāṇa* also gives a few facts. A *madhva* writer Nārāyaṇāchārya relates some details in his *Madhvavijaya* and *Maṇimañjarī*. But many of the facts in these are legendary and of doubtful historical value.[2]

According to Telang, Śaṅkara flourished about the middle or the end of the sixth century A.D. Sir R.G. Bhandarkar proposes A.D. 680, as the date of Śaṅkara's birth and is even inclined to go a few years earlier. Max Müller and Macdonell hold that he was born in A.D. 788 and died in A.D. 820. Keith also holds that he flourished in the first quarter of the ninth century.[3]

Early in his youth, it is believed, he went to a vedic school presided over by Govinda, the pupil of Gauḍapāda.[4] It was Govinda who evidently taught him the main principles of advaitism. He was a youthful prodigy of vedic learning and creative intelligence. He accepted sanyāsa at a very young age, but yet did not become an inactive recluse. He wandered from place to place engaging in discussion with the leaders of other schools of thought. In the course of these tours

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he is supposed to have met Kumārila and Maṇḍana Miśra. The latter became his disciple under the name of Sureśvarācārya.[5] He established four monasteries of which the chief is the one at Śṛṅgerī in south India. The others are those at Purī in the east, Dvārakā in the west and Badrīnātha in the Himālayas. A touching incident about which tradition is unanimous, is that in open defiance of the rules for sanyāsīs Śaṅkara performed the funeral rites of his mother and thus incurred the opposition of his community.[6] He died at the age of thirty-two in the Himālayas.

Śaṅkara had many qualities in him. He was a philosopher and poet, a savant and a sage, a mystic and a religious reformer, all in one.

Śaṅkara

It is generally accepted that Śaṅkara's philosophy derives from the upaniṣads. His doctrines of monism and illusionism both have been commonly traced to the upaniṣads.[7] Actually, however, the upaniṣadic concept of Brahman is that of a universal self which creates the world out of itself.[8] The diversity of creation is substantially unified in Brahman, its own differentiations are only names and forms. This view is capable of being interpreted as a merely pantheistic doctrine where creation is real, at least in a secondary sense. The sense of the unreality of the world may be a logical implication of the doctrine, but it is only occasionally expressed in upaniṣads. It is the Buddhists who pointed out the contradiction between change and reality. If something is real, it must have causal efficiency (*arthakriyākaritva*). If, on the other hand, it changes, it must be instantaneous. The Buddhists themselves saw the world as changeable and instantaneous and hence ultimately unreal. Vedānta was clearly committed to the eternity of the real.[9] How was this to be reconciled with real creation? If the Brahman is eternal and absolute, there is no scope for any real creation and transformation. Among the pre-Śaṅkara commentators of vedāntic texts the doctrine of transformation was widely held—*Brahma pariṇāmavāda*. It is the opinion of Thibaut that the *Brahma sūtras* which attempted to synthesize the upaniṣadic doctrine into a system are really closer to this point of view which has apparently held by Baudhāyana in his *vṛtti* and later on elaborated by Rāmānuja than to the illusionistic doctrine of Śaṅkara which,[10] as has been pointed out by Mahamahopādhyāya Vidhu Shekhar Bhattacharya, gets linked with Mahāyāna Buddhist doctrines through Gauḍapāda.[11] Whether there was any actual or direct influence of Mahāyāna illusionism on Śaṅkara may be a matter of dispute.[12] Still there can be no doubt that Śaṅkara most prominently emphasized the illusionistic implications of upaniṣadic Brahmavāda, though he continued to accept the world as neither absolutely real nor as absolutely unreal and described *avidyā* as a power of Brahman.

One consequence of this doctrine was that it tended to denigrate the significance of action. The identification of reality with unchangeability was obviously inconsistent with the reality of action which meant change and the production of

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change.[13] The old Vedic doctrine of action in the form of good deeds, sacrifices, worship and meditation, all suffered from this change in the point of view. Even the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* says at one place that the eternal cannot be obtained by transient means.[14] In the pre-Śaṅkara tradition of the Vedānta an attempt was made to reconcile the points of view of karma and jñāna as *jñānakarmasamuccayavāda*.[15] The *Gītā* in particular is sometimes taken to exemplify this point of view. Śaṅkara is its most vigorous critic.[16] For him action has meaning only within the frame-work of ignorance. So long as one identifies oneself with the body, one is bound by the code of social and religious obligations. Moral action consisting in the disinterested performance of duties can lead to the purification of the mind giving it fitness for being illumined by knowledge; action cannot by itself either lead to knowledge or to salvation.

Śaṅkara's philosophy thus emphasized non-dualism against the dualism of Sānkhya,[17] illusionism against realistic pantheistic doctrines such as *brahmapariṇāmavāda*,[18] and the doctrine of knowledge alone leading to salvation against the Mīmāṁsakas and the early Vedantic doctrines of *jñānakarmasamūccayavāda*.[19]

The doctrine of bhakti was traditionally connected with the doctrine of karma and worship and as such was unlikely to receive serious attention from Śankara. However the *Gītā* posed a serious challenge in this respect and Śaṅkara was led to define his position on bhakti more closely.

Of course if we consider the *stotras* attributed to Śaṅkara as his, he would turn out to be a devout worshipper of Śakti.[20] But since the authorship of these writings has sometimes been disputed, we shall discuss the question with respect to his indisputable authentic works.

In the commentary on the *Brahmasūtras* Śaṅkara seeks to reconcile Theism with Absolutism and the religion of worship and meditation with the more severe one of pure knowledge by means of affecting a distinction between two aspects of reality—*nirguṇa* and *saguṇa brahma* or Brahma and Īśvara.[21] In itself Brahman is beyond all qualities and distinctions, but relative to the world or māyā it may be viewed as endowed with such qualities and powers as omniscience and omnipotence etc. In this conditioned or *sopādhika* aspect Brahman is the same as Īśvara.[22] The definition of Brahman in the *Brahmasūtras* as the creator etc.[23] of the universe is thus the definition of Brahman not in its essence (*svarūpa lakṣaṇa*) but as *per accidens* (*taṭasatha lakṣaṇa*). In essence Brahman is beyond casuality. It is the transcendent ground of the world—utterly unaffected by its change and corruption. Yet it appears as the cause both instrumental and material—*abhinnanimittopādāra*, of the world.[24] Śaṅkara himself does not affect any technical distinction between *pariṇāma* and *vivarta* i.e. real and illusory transformation in just these works. But the distinction is present in him very much. Śaṅkara's followers made the two words—*pariṇāma* and *vivarta*—technically different in meaning. Śaṅkara was content to follow the use of *pariṇāma* as in the *Brahmasūtras* themselves. This enables him

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to agree with the sūtras at one level but also to suggest a higher and deeper truth at a different level. Similarly, Śaṅkara is able to distinguish between the spritual development of those who worship '*saguṇa brahma*' or 'Īśvara' from that of those who acquire the knowledge of '*nirguṇa brahma*'. The former engage in some kind of action[25] and thus reach higher worlds after death; the latter are absorbed in Brahma.[26] The technique of Śaṅkara in his commentary is of the profoundest consequence. He resolves the problem of reconciling the world and Brahma, of karma and jñāna through effecting a difference of levels. From the practical and empirical or '*vyāvahārika*' point of view the world is real and action is possible.[27] At this level moral and religious life have an earnest significance and they have the effect of gradually purifying, transforming and elevating the mind. On the other hand from the point of view of truth and reality, the '*pāramārthika*' point of view, *Brahman* alone is significant and is totally beyond distinctions and descriptions. At this level reality is eternal, perfect, non-dual. Action, therefore, is impossible. It is the level of knowledge *subspecie aeternitatis*, of non-dual self-knowledge manifesting itself in its eternal nature.

This distinction of levels cannot but remind one of the similar distinction which was effected by Mādhyamika Buddhists. Whether it was derived from them historically is difficult to say because although there is a clear similarity of ideas we do not have any sufficient historical evidence.[28]

In the commentary on the *Gītā* Śaṅkara thinks of bhakti as four-fold in accordance with the verse—"*caturvidhā bhajante māṁ janāḥ sukṛtinorjuna.*" He concludes that the fourth or the last class of bhakta being the jñānin, bhakti must ultimately be identical with jñāna.[29] In so far as bhakti stands for different modes of worship, sacrifice, cultivation of moral qualities and attributes such as gentleness, compassion, service etc. it is really identical with karman.[30] The result of this *karmalakṣaṇa bhakti* is the purification of the heart—*sattvaśuddhi*.[31] It culminates in the *śaraṇāgati*—by abandoning all personal and selfish ends, by acting disinterestedly out of a sense of service and devotion to God.[32] By placing one's trust wholly in Him the mind becomes free from its inherent biases, taints and distractions. It is easily able to turn away from external objects and the false images produced by thought at the service of worldly life. Thus this kind of bhakti is a kind of preparation for the dawn of knowledge. As Śaṅkara puts it in the *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*—of the causal factors entering into the emergence of knowledge, bhakti is the greatest.[33]

But when the *Gītā* states that by bhakti one knows the Lord "*bhaktyā māṁ abhijānāti.....*" then Śaṅkara explains *bhakti* to mean the fourth type of bhakti, i.e. the *jñānalakṣaṇa* type of bhakti. This is an intimate and immediate awareness of the Lord, which reveals His true nature and is indistinguishable from non-dual self-knowledge. Even in his commentary on the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* Śaṅkara explains the famous verse on knowing the self through His grace alone as reaching such knowledge by turning inwards to self-knowledge.[34] Thus *karma-lakṣaṇā bhakti*

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culminates in *śaraṇāgati* and prepares the ground for *jñānalakṣaṇā bhakti* which is ultimately nothing except self-knowledge. In later *bhakti-śāstra*, bhakti as work leads to jñāna and which in turn leads to true bhakti as love which is something unique. In Śaṅkara the first two stages are clearly formulated for him self-knowledge is ultimate. It is a state of bliss but Śaṅkara does not choose to especially identify and describe it as love possibly because love tends to raise dualistic implications.

Alleged influence of Islam on Śaṅkara

Tarachand in his *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, has pointed out that the Malabar coast had definite contacts with Arab traders by the eighth century. Consequently the Islamic idea of monotheism probably influenced Śaṅkara.[35] The idea has been repeated by Humayun Kabir in his "*Indian Heritage*."[36]

But Śaṅkara's thought is monistic not monotheistic. In fact, he believes 'God' to be a relative, not an ultimate reality. It is only in relation to the human mind that the Absolute appears as God. But human endeavour seeks to go behind it to the transcendent reality to which even the attributes of the divine cannot be applied. On the other hand, at the relative level Śaṅkara not only accepts one god but many gods. Thus there is not the remotest similarity between his doctrine and that of Islam which was an activistic monotheistic religion. Śaṅkara's is an essentially contemplative and intellectual transcendental absolutism.

Śaṅkara's contribution to bhakti

It is common enough to believe that while Śaṅkara's stotras are full of devotional inspiration, his philosophical writings only negatively contributed to the development of bhakti. From the account given above it would be clear that the truth is different. Śaṅkara's philosophical analysis provides a reconciliation between bhakti and *advaita* by reinterpreting bhakti at its highest as identical with knowledge. Śaṅkara's *jñānalakṣaṇā bhakti* is *sādhya bhakti*. It is only *sādhana-bhakti* or *karmalakṣaṇā* bhakti that belongs to the realm of duality and ignorance. It must be left behind like the raft, to use a Buddhist parable (*kullūpama*). This aspect of Śaṅkara's thought lay dormant for a long time till Madhusūdana Sarasvatī took it up again.

Rāmānuja

We have seen before that bhakti blossomed amidst the Tamil saints or *Āḻvārs* in the seventh-ninth centuries. They were succeeded by the theologians whose main objective was to establish a philosophical basis for the worship of a personal God and faith in the saving grace of that God. Rāmānuja was preceded by Nāthamuni and Aḷvandar or Yamunācārya. Yamunācārya struggled hard to defend the Vaiṣṇava *āgamas* and prove that they had the same meaning as in the vedas. His successor Rāmānuja also had the same task before him—to bring to light and reinforce the theistic view of the vedas after the advaitism of Śaṅkara. His chief works attempt to reconcile the thought of the upaniṣads, the *Gītā* and the *Brahma Sūtras* with the faith and belief of the Vaiṣṇava saints. Rāmānuja's faith was more philosophical

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and restrained than that of most of his predecessors as well as successors. Neither was he ready to reject the regulations of the vedas nor was he inclined to make much of the mythology of the purāṇas. His aim was to proclaim the doctrine of salvation through bhakti and make it the central teaching of the upaniṣads, the *Gītā* and the *Brahma Sūtras.*

Rāmānuja was born in the year A.D. 1017 in Sriperumbudur.[37] After receiving elementary education he had a course in the Vedānta under Yādavaprakāśa of Conjeevaram, but he could not support the interpretation of the latter on all points.[38] Alvandar, the head of the matha at Śrirangam was impressed by Rāmānuja's learning and thought of installing him in the apostolic seat at Śrīrangam. At the time Rāmānuja went to the master, the latter was no more and he says that three out of five fingers in the right hand were folded. The disciples interpreted this to mean that he had three unfulfilled desires the chief of which was the commentary on the *Brahmsūtra.*[39]

Later on he accepted Mahāpūrṇa as his ācārya and after some time became a sanyāsin. He settled down at Śriraṅgam and acquired a full knowledge of Tiruvāyamayi. Rāmānuja wrote *Vedāntasāra, Vedārthasaṅgraha,* and *Vedāntadīpa* and composed his great commentaries on the *Brahmasūtra* and the *Bhagavadgītā.* The learned among the Vaiṣṇavas gave their approval to Rāmānuja's exposition of the *Brahmasūtra* and it became the commentary (*Śrībhāṣya*) for the Vaiṣṇavas. Rāmānuja toured round South India, restored many Vaiṣṇava temples and converted large numbers to Vaiṣṇavism.

Rāmānuja followed the example of Śaṅkara in commenting on the basic sources of the Vedānta and also attempted to rebut the doctrine of Śaṅkara. Rāmānuja propounds a full-fledged monotheism which it is usual to describe as qualified monism, *Viśiṣṭādvaita.* God is the one reality but He includes the world and the souls as His aspects.[40] The soul or *cit,* the world or *acit* and Iśvara or God are the three fundamental principles which constitute a unified whole with inner diversity. *Acit* or the insentient principle, *cit* or the finite conscious principle or the individual soul are together like the body and the soul and are controlled by the infinite spiritual principle or God. Brahman for Rāmānuja is not a pure unity for the verdict of consciousness,[41] scriptures,[42] perception[43] and inference[44] is that experience has always a content characterized by differences and hence Brahman cannot be pure thought. Brahman is the highest self characterized by excellent attributes.[45] His essential attributes are knowledge characterized by bliss and He is possessed of numberless auspicious qualities and similar to and higher than Him there is no other. Bhaga indicates six attributes—dominion, strength, glory, splendour, wisdom, and dispassion. Rāmānuja also ascribed to Him the quality of Love which leads Him to assume various forms. The relation of Brahman to the sentient and non-sentient creation has been defined by Rāmānuja in terms of *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva* (body-soul relation), *viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣya bhāva* (substance-attributes relation),

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śeṣa-śeṣi-bhāva (dependent and dependent upon relation), *aṁśaṁśī-bhāva* (part-whole relation), *ādhārādheya bhāva* (relation of the supporter and supported), *niyantṛ-niyata bhāva* (ruler and ruled relation) and *rakṣaka-rakṣya bhāva* (redeemer-redeemed relation).[46] All these relations between Brahman and sentient and non-sentient creation, show a feeling of love between them. This is especially seen in the aspect of the Lord as the redeemer of the souls. The Lord shows *saulabhya* or easy accessibility and *sauśīlya* or graciousness.

Hence God is the inner monitor, controller of the external world as well as the human psyche.[47] Almost as in Spinoza matter and mind become the attributes of God, who remains the infinite substance determining the nature of all finite things.

On this view the individual soul suffers from a double alienation. It is alienated in itself on account of its identification with the insentient principle of the body. It is also alienated from God on account of a more radical ignorance of Him. In his commentary on the *Gītā* Rāmānuja explains the first six chapters as related to the self-knowledge of the individual soul and the next six chapters to the process of growing awareness of the Divine.[48] The first stage consists in the practice of *karmayoga* and *jñānayoga* culminating in the true knowledge of itself by the individual soul through the performance of duties, avoidance of sins, cultivation of selflessness and dispassion and through recollection and contemplation on the true nature of the soul as distinct from insentient reality. Gradually the individual soul reaches self-awareness and sheds its ignorance and attachments to the world. It is now in a fit condition to seek God. As soon as the finite soul is freed from the heavy burden of material existence, psychologically speaking, it begins to realize its loneliness and incompleteness and longs to overcome it through a direct contact with its own inner reality which is the self-sufficient and infinite divine principle. In its worldly condition the spirit is enmeshed in matter and forgetful of God as well as itself. Freed from this bondage through right action and knowledge the spirit turns to God. Thus begins *bhaktiyoga*.

Bhakti is the only means for attaining to God. Karma or ritualistic duties are, according to Rāmānuja, but means to the end which is the obtaining of the blissful vision of the deity. Bhakti in Rāmānuja is identical with the constant remembrance of the Lord reaching the intensity of vision.[49] Thus an uninterrupted flow of the mind thinking and remembering the Lord is at once contemplation, worship and devotion—dhyāna, *upāsanā* and bhakti. This condition of the mind is ultimately described as *dhruvānusmṛti* or constant remembrance.[50] It is also described as *darśanasamānākāra* i.e. equivalent to vision. '*Upāsanā*' has the character of devout meditation (bhakti) and consists in direct intuition of Brahman.[51] According to him bhakti has the same meaning as *Upāsanā*. *Upāsanā* is a continuity of steady remembrance, uninterrupted like the flow of oil. This is an agreement with the scriptural passage which declares that by steady remembrance all the ties are

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loosened.[52] Such remembrance is the same as intuition.[53] This is something which lies within the province of human effort.

It is followed by the self-revealing grace of God. The upaniṣadic verse about the self revealing the self to those whom he chooses,[54] is explained to mean that the soul which constantly remembers the Lord, being dear to Him, receives the vision of the Lord through his grace.[55] Rāmānuja believes in absolute self-surrender to God which is known as *prapatti* or *śaraṇāgati*.

Regarding the Lord's grace there was a doctrinal split in later times between the Tengalai (southern) school and the Vadagalai (Northern) school.[56] The two views have come to be known as the 'monkey and young one argument' (*markaṭa kiśora nyāya*) and the cat and kitten argument (*mārjāra kiśora nyāya*). The former view maintains that some effort is necessary on the part of individual soul to evoke divine grace and the latter view holds that the entire initiative lies with God and the individual effort. The latter view is also called *nir hetuka kṛpā* or spontaneous grace of God. So far as *Śrībhāṣya* is concerned Rāmānuja seems to favour the former view though in his commentary on the *Gītā* and in the *Gadya Traya* wherever the idea of *prapatti* or absolute unqualified self surrender to God is stressed, he seems to be inclined to the latter view. To Rāmānuja the Law of karma and the operation of divine grace are not inconsistent. He refers to the 'tender regard to man's welfare', of the scripture which enjoins on the individual soul the discipline of righteous conduct which tends to "produce and help to perfect the knowledge of Brahman". This itself is an evidence of divine grace. He writes "when a man reaches knowledge the non-clinging and destruction of all sins may be through the power of knowledge". He renders the verse in *Gītā*[57] thus "It is only to one who is entirely cleansed of all his sins that it becomes the object of love. It is only such a person who would converge all the strength of his intellect (buddhi) to me as his sole aim".[58]

Again, commenting on the *Gītā*[59] Rāmānuja seems to refer to the operation of spontaneous and irresistible grace of God which demands nothing else from the individual than the act of complete surrender (*prapatti*) and laying the entire burden of its salvation on God himself (*bhāranyāsa*). This idea of God's irresistible spontaneous grace (*nirhetuka kṛpā*) is accentuated in Rāmānuja's *śaraṇāgati gadya* where the Lord is made to say "having through my mere grace alone fully overcome, with its cause, the obstacles to the attainment of high devotion thou shalt become my eternal servant".[60]

His works relating to the idea of Prapatti

Śaraṇāgati-gadya is a dialogue between the soul and the over soul, the *jīvātmā* and the *paramātmā*.[61] The theme expresses the consummation devoutly wished for by every true devotee. The traditional commentators say that it falls into three divisions each representing a *rahasya* or secret and altogether demonstrative of the

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three *rahasya* or *Rahasya Traya* of Śrīvaiṣṇava theology. Vedāntadeśika (the great exponent of Vadagalai school) has written a treatise "*Rahasya trayasāra*" dealing with the three *rahasyas*. Similarly, Pilai Lokācārya (exponent of Tengalai school) has written '*mumukṣuppadi*' on the *Rahasyatraya*. The *Śaraṇāgati gadya* brings to us a revelation of Rāmānuja's impassioned religious conciousness and his vivid sense of the personal presence of God.

In his *Śrīraṅga gadya*, he addresses himself to Śrī Raṅganātha, the holy image of Śrīraṅgam. In his *Vaikuṇṭha gadya* he acknowledges his debt to Yamunācārya from whom he got the gem of *bhakti yoga*. In his *Nityagrantham* he prescribes rituals for daily worship (*nitya*) in solitary meditation (dhyāna) to one who would like to practise the presence of God over and above. The worship of God should be communal by offering oneself entirely to Him. This leads to the blossoming of the soul under His Grace. One has to sit in tranquility and meditate—this engenders a deep affection for God which takes the form of overlord worship which is his real service. Nothing can equate the pure joy of this *kainkarya* of which the daily worship is an external symbol. This is an act of worship which is a blend of dhyāna, *upāsanā*, and bhakti, issuing itself out in service (*kainkarya*) of God. The object of this is *Bhagavatprāpti*.[62]

Contrast between the views of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on bhakti

To Śaṅkara lower bhakti is inseparable from karman. Worship too is nothing except devotional action. Higher bhakti is identified with jñāna. One could simply say that karman and bhakti prepare the ground for jñāna. On the other hand, for Rāmānuja karman and jñāna prepare the way for bhakti. Bhakti here is not what Śaṅkara means by higher bhakti, but worship. The constant remembrance of God approaches the character of vision. This difference between Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja arises from the difference conceived between man and God. For Śaṅkara this difference is illusory and hence knowledge which alone can remove illusion is the one and only means to the recapturing of the original unity of the human spirit with the Divine. To be in a position to acquire such a knowledge, however, man has to undergo a long travail which gradually purifies man and enables him to win back his original spiritual condition. For Rāmānuja on the other hand man is neither wholly identical with God nor wholly different. Reality is a concrete whole with an inner differentiation, which reminds one of Hegel. Since God and man are not equal partners in this unity man can realize his true relationship with God only through the latter's grace. Man's basic relationship with God is one of worship and loving remembrance i.e. bhakti. In Śaṅkara, the human spirit is and realizes itself to be the supreme spirit. Only ignorance stands between him and the eternal truth. For Rāmānuja God is the dearest object of man's devotion, wherein mankind finds its solace and salvation, Śaṅkara's standpoint is that of philosophy and gnosis, Rāmānuja's standpoint is that of religion and worship. In Rāmānuja's jñāna must assume the form of bhakti (*bhaktirūpam jñāna*) and the fusion of these

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two must finally rest in *Kainkarya* or consecrated service or karma. The relation between these, however, is not one of succession but of simultaneity. The whole process is consummated quickly by the way known as *prapatti* which is the way of absolute, unqualified self surrender to God. "His philosophy has found its fulfilment in Love. This, indeed is the fulfilment of the aspiration of his soul expressed in the invocatory verse of *Śri Bhāṣya* "*bhāyatu mama parasmin śemuṣi bhakti rūpā*".[63]

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1. See Chapter VI for details.
2. Cf. Mādhavācārya, *Śaṅkaradigvijaya*, ed. and tr. Baldev Upādhyāya, pp. 7-9.
3. Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 476.
4. Mādhava, *Śankaradigvijaya*, V, 101, 105.
5. ibid., VII, 77ff, 103, 116.
6. Mādhava, op. cit., 14.46ff.
7. Cf. Thibaut (tr.), *Vedāntasūtra*, with the commentary of Śaṅkara, (SBE), pp xvii ff.
8. *Muṇḍaka Up.*, 1, 1,7; *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, 2, 1, etc.
9. Cf. Sankara's dictum : "*Yat sattannityam*" (commentary on the *Gītā*).
10. Thibaut, op. cit., pp. 88ff.
11. V. Bhattacharya, *Āgamaśastra*, Introduction, pp. 86ff.
12. Śāntarakṣita admits the similarity of *advaita* Vedānta to Buddhism—*Tattvasaṅgraha* cf. "*Teṣāṁ alpāparādhaṁ tu ḍarśanaṁ nityatoktitaḥ*", verse 330.
13. Cf. G.C. Pande, *Mahāvīra Jayanti Smārikā*, Jaipur, 1963.
14. *Kaṭha Up.*, 2, 10.
15. M.M. Gopinath Kaviraj, *Introduction to Brahmasūtra-Bhāṣya*, passim (Acyutagranthamālā).
16. Śaṅkara, *Commentary on Gītā*, 18,66=*Śaṅkaragranthāvalī*, vol. VIII, (Vāṇīvilāsa Press), pp. 456ff.
17. e.g. *Commentary ad Brahmasūtra*, II, 2, 1-10=Thibaut, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 363ff.
18. "*Na cevaṁ pariṇāmaśrutiḥ pariṇāmapratipādanārtha*", *Commentary ad Brahmasūtras*, II, 1, 27. cf. Devraja and Hirevastha, *A Source book of Śaṅkara*, pp. 41-43.
19. e.g. Commentary ad *Brahmasūtra*, I, 1, 1, 4; Commentary ad *Taittrīya*, I, 11.
20. e.g. *Saundaryalaharī* shows him a worshipper of Tripurasundarī. It may be remembered that a tradition of worshipping the Śricakra continues within the monasteries of the followers of Śaṅkara.
21. "*Dvirūpaṁ hi brahmāvagamyate nāma-rūpa-vikāra-bhedopādhi-viśiṣṭaṁ, tadviparītaṁ ca ṣarvopādhi—vivarjitaṁ*", cf. Commentary ad *Brahmasūtra*, I, 1, 11.
22. Cf. Thibaut, op. cit., pp. xcv ff.
23. "*Janmādyasya yataḥ*"—*Brahmasūtra*, I, 1, 2.
24. Cf. *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, (Benaras, 1937), p. 58.

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25. "*Saguṇaṁ upāsanārthaṁ tatra tatropadiśyate*", Commentary ad *Brahmasūtra*, I, 2, 14.
26. Cf. ibid., IV, 3, 17 ff.
27. Srimati Saral Jhingran, '*Action in Advaita Vedānta*' (Unpublished thesis, University of Rajasthan).
28. This distinction of the *Vyāvahārika* and the *Pāramārthika* appears to have been made clearly by the Mādhyamikas in the first instance. Nāgārjuna, in fact, explains that although *Paramārtha* is the ground of *Vyavahāra*, it cannot be expounded without the latter, nor should the two be regarded as really two—'*Vyavahāramanāgamya Paramārtho na deśyate*', '*Saṁsārasya na nirvānāt kincidasti Viśeṣaṇaṁ*'. (*Mādhyaṁika Kārikas*). This Mādhyamika standpoint is clearly presupposed by Gauḍapāda as has been established by Dr. V. Bhattacharya. Since Śaṅkara's teacher was the pupil of Gauḍapāda, it is not surprising that Śaṅkara should be familiar with this distinction. cf. V. Bhattacharya, *Āgamaśāstra*.
29. Commentary ad *Gītā* 18, 55; *Śaṅkara Granthāvalī* vol. VIII, pp. 448-50.
30. e.g. Commentary ad *Gītā* 13, 11: *Śaṅkaragranthāvalī*, vol. VIII, p. 318—"*Jñānanimittatvad jñānam ucyate*". Commentary ad *Chāndogya Up.* preamble to 1, 1, 1; *Daśopaniṣadāh*, p. 352. *Upāsanā* as *Karmāṅga*.
31. Cf. Commentary ad *Taittirīya*, vol. II,—'*Upāyabhūtani hi karmāni vidyam prati*,' *Daśopaniṣadāḥ*, p. 279; '*Upāsanāni sattvasuddhi-karatvena ...*" ibid., p. 352; "*Jñānotpattyādi hetuṁ sahakārikāraṇaṁ buddhi-viśuddhatvādi...*," Commentary ad *Gītā*, 18, 55; *Collected works*, Vol. VIII, p. 449.
32. "*Karmayoganiṣṭhāyāḥ paramarahasyaṁ Īśvara-Śaraṇataṁ...*" Commentary ad *Gītā*, 18, 66; *Collected works*, vol. VIII, p. 454.
33. "*Mokṣa-kāraṇa-sāmagryāṁ bhaktir eva garīyasī*," *Viveka-cūdāmaṇi*, 32; *Collected Writings*, vol. X, p. 5.
34. Commentary ad *Kaṭha Up.*, 2, 23.
35. Dr. Tarachand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, pp, 107, 111.
36. Humayun Kabir, *Indian Heritage*, pp. 66-67.
37. Ramakrishnananda, *The Life of Sri Rāmānuja*, p. 72.
38. Yamunachārya, *Rāmānuja's Teachings in His Own Words*, pp. 4-5.
39. Cf. R. Pārthasārathi, *Rāmānujāchārya*, p. 29.
40. "*Vastutastu Vedāntānāṁ cidacidviśiṣṭādvaitaṁ ekameva Brahmeti tāpasyaṁ*" (*Yatīdramatadīpika*), cf. Rāmānuja, Commentary ad *Gītā*, 7, 6-8; *Collected Works*, pp. 233-35.
41. Thibaut (tr.), Rāmānuja's Commentary ad *Vedāntasūtras* (SBE), pp. 39-40.
42. ibid., pp. 40-41.
43. ibid., pp. 41-42.
44. ibid., p. 43.
45. '*Kalvāṇa-guṇa-gaṇaḥ puruṣottamaḥ*,' ibid., p. 156.
46. Yamunācārya, op. cit.: p. 73; P. N. Srinivāsachāri, *The philosophy of Viśiṣṭādvaita*, Chapters IV-IX.
47. ibid., pp. 145-46.
48. Opening remarks to the commentary on the 7th chapter of the *Gītā*, p. 227; cf. P. N. Srinivāsachāri, op. cit., pp. 372ff.

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49. "*Seyam smṛtir darśana-rūpa pratipāditā. Darśana-rūpatā ca pratyakṣatāpattiḥ,*" Commentary ad *Brahmasūtras, Śribhāsya*, 79.
50. "*Evam rūpā dhruvānusmṛtir eva bhaktiśabdena abhidhīyate,*" ibid., p. 86.
51. Thibaut, op. cit., p. 284.
52. *Chaṅdogya Up.*, VII, 26, 2.
53. Thibaut, op. cit., pp. 14-16.
54. *Kaṭha Up.*, 11, 2, 3.
55. Thibaut, op. cit., p. 16.
56. P. N. Srinivāsachāri, op. cit., pp. 533ff.
57. *Gītā*, IV, 13.
58. ibid., XII, 11.
59. ibid., IX, 29.
60. *Saraṇāgatigadyaṁ*, para 17.
61. Yamunāchārya, op. cit., pp. 156-60.
62. Cf. P. N. Srinivāsachāri, op. cit., Chapter XVI.
63. ibid., p. 132;

In his article "Śaṅkara and Vaiṣṇavism" in the *Proceedings and transactions of All India Oriental Conference* (18th Session, December 1955), S. Ramachandra Śāstrī tries to show that though tradition acknowledges Śaṅkara as a worshipper of Śiva, most probably he was a follower of Vaiṣṇavism. His main contention against the Bhāgavatism was that he could not accept that the individual soul originates from Vāsudeva. Śāstrī quotes S. K. Dey from his 'Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement' and says that probably for reasons like this only he concealed his own predilection for the doctrine of bhakti and preached a doctrine of non-quality.

In his *bhāṣyas* on Bṛhadāraṇyaka and Māṇḍūkya Kāṛikās Īśvara, supreme God and Viṣṇu are synonymous. cf. Śaṅkara on *Bṛahadāraṇyaka Up.*, 3, 73. He accepts Pāñcarātras apart from the *Mahābhārata* to substantiate his views on *Smṛti* texts which are an authority for the followers of Vaiṣṇavism. His notion of māyā was greatly influenced by Vaiṣṇavic thought which accepted māyā as śakti of Īśvara. He considers it as the creative aspect of the Lord but not as a metaphysical reality, and quotes from *Mahābhārata*, Śānti Parva, 339-44 to this effect:

> "*Tathā ca viśvarūpadharo nārāyaṇo nāradamunā ceti smaryati māyā hyeṣā māyā sṛṣṭā yaṇmām paśvasi nārada sarva bhūtaquṇair yuktaṁ naivaṁ māṁ jñātumarhasi.*"

In his commentaries the various examples which he gives are drawn from Vaiṣṇavism e.g., in his commentary on *Brahmasūtra* 1, III, 14, he says that Brahman is present in the body of individual as Viṣṇu is in *Śālagrāma*, mentions in the *Brahmasūtra Bhāṣya* six times that for him the ultimate goal is the same as *Parama pada* of Viṣṇu. If we agree with Dr. S. K. Belvalkar that *Govindaśataka*, *Satpadī Stotra* and *Bhaja Goviṇda* the *śloka*, etc. are written by Śaṅkara then we can say that he gives expression to his personal views in these.

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10

Bhakti in Relation to Art

Religious Background of Ancient Indian Art

In the ancient Indian view of art we can see a close correlation between religion and art. Art is more like a sādhanā. The maker of an icon visualizes the form of that particular *devatā* as described in a given canonical prescription i.e. dhyāna or mantra, and draws this form to itself. The form emanates ultimately from heaven and immediately from the "immanent space in the heart" resulting in a concord (*saṁstāva*) of seer and seen. The imager must realize the complete self-identification (*ātmānam....dhyāyet*) with the form of divinity. The quintesscence of art lies neither in transient sensational pleasure nor in any utilitarian purpose but in a kind of bhakti, a form of self-surrender where the individual ego is subsumed in a higher transcendental spirit.[1]

Images are of fundamental importance in Hindu religion and in the words of an eminent scholar, "It may be said that images are to the Hindu worshipper what diagrams are to the geometrician."[2] Attempts to define an icon can be seen very early in history. In the *Gṛhyasūtras* and *Arthaśāstra* it is called *pratīka*, *pratikṛti* or a *pratibimba* which would mean reflection, a representative figure or a symbol. But a symbol may be a work of art or even a stone or a tree. But when a symbol is given an anthropomorphic form (or sometimes a theriomorphic form), it becomes an image or an icon. The Divine is represented according to human needs by an image.[3] Indian mind has never seen a dichotomy even between the idea of monism and image worship. The image in itself is neither God nor any angel "but merely an aspect of hypostasis (*avasthā*) of God who is in the last analysis without likeness (*amūrta*), not determined by form (*arūpa*), trans-form (*para-rūpa*). His various forms or emanations are conceived by a process of symbolic filiation."[4] God Himself condescended to come in His image made by man for worship. This is His *arcā* manifestation. But it should not be supposed that this idea and the idea of omnipresence of God are contradictory. The invoking and dismissing (*āvāhana* and *visarjana*) of the deity are really the projection of the worshipper's mental attitude towards the image. By invocation he announces his intention of using the image as

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God himself so that his communion with God is achieved without much difficulty, by dismissal he announces that his service has been completed.

Though God is known to be the immutable and attributeless supreme, He is also the Puruṣottama who is capable of having a very personal relationship with the devotee and who manifests Himself in various forms.[5] This is the reason why we find a diversified iconography in India. The Lord manifests Himself in various forms due to the diversity of the need of individuals and groups. Historically also this multiplicity is due to the inclusion of all pre-existing forms, all local forms in a greater theological synthesis where they are interpreted as modes of emanations of the supreme Īśvara. Yāska supports this view in his *Nirukta*.[6]

The Idea and Evolution of Image Worship

Let us see the evolution of the idea of image worship in India. In the Indus Valley period art shows some characteristic features of the Indian art system. We see an idealistic representation of the human figure, and a realistic representation of the animal figure. The human figure becomes adequate for symbolising a deity by virtue of its capacity for expressiveness and generalizations. Even in the Indus figures it is the tension and stance of the body which suggest movement, vitality, something more than mere physical form. Animals, on the other hand, lack will. They are fixed natural forms.[7] It is obvious that Indus art had the idea of symbolising the deity in human form. Hence, the seated figure in yogic posture with horns on his head in the Indus Valley seals is believed to be Rudra-Śiva as *Yogī* and *Paśupati*. Accoading to V. S. Agrawal, the standard or banner in the Unicorn seals seem to be the earliest form of banner *stambha* dedicated to a deity and this deity must have been Rudra.[8] On the top of the pillar is a transverse bar in several examples which is similar to the triangle-headed standard on the punch-marked coins. In the seals in which the horned figure of Yogī (identified by V. S. Agrawal, following Marshall as *Paśupati*) is seen, animals can also be seen, and V. S. Agrawal says that even the worship of animals comes under the cult of Paśupati. He says that the Mother Goddess worshipped in the Indus Valley was associated with Rudra as his sister. The two torsos from Harappā—one of red sandstone and the other of grey limestone—are also identified by him as the Nude God and Goddess in the *Atharvaveda—Mahānagna* and *Mahānagnī*. The name of Rudra-Śiva as Digambara (sky clothed) typifies the same concept.[9]

Hence, there was certainly a tradition of idealistically representing human form, most of the figures symbolizing a deity.

This tradition seems to have been lost in the Vedic period.[10] To worship Sūrya, Agni, Vāyu and Soma, their images were unnecessary. The place of anthropomorphic gods was taken by these "directly perceived" gods who, though they were a source of inspiration for hymns and poetry, were imperceptible for art.[11] The Vedic alter itself had a symbolic significance. The *vedī* was the Goddess Earth itself where the kindling fire, the messenger of the gods, united the earth with heaven. The

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terrestrial fire brought its worshippers to a close relation with the celestial fire. The Fire God as representative of all gods came down on the altar to consume the oblations.[12] Hence, image worship for them was not an unavoidable necessity. But the fact that there was a tradition of image worship before the Vedic age makes it a matter of wonder that it should have been absent in the Vedic age. This is still a matter of controversy among scholars whether images were worshipped in the early Vedic period. Max Müller[13] had denied any possibility of image worship in the early Vedic period. Bollenson believed that they existed at that time.[14] T.A.G. Rao also supports this view.[15] We might agree with J. N. Banerjea when he says that image worship must have existed in the Vedic age among the lower stratum of society even if not among the followers of the Vedas.[16] By the side of the high gods of Vedic religion who were abstract forces expressed in natural form, worship of lower gods as Yakṣas must have continued and consequently their images must have been made from time to time.

In course of time the simple invocations of the higher Vedic gods on the altar turned into magical rites of sacrifice compelling the gods to shower more and more benedictions on men. The method of construction of the altar became complicated as visualized in the *Śulva Sūtras*. At this time the philosophers tried to do away with the outward forms of worship as a reaction. But ordinary men unable to understand the complicated rituals or to completely ignore them like the philosophers who also could not do away with some of the outward form of ritual, turned towards the pre-vedic system of worship and worshipped images. The altar (the earth, the earth goddess) became the *Pītha* (*Prakṛti*) and the image of God was Puruṣa Himself, (*arcāmūrtiḥ smṛtaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ Piṇḍikā kamalālayā tayor yo vidhinā yogaḥ sā pratiṣṭhā prakīrtitā*).[17] As the most popular Vedic gods had become instruments or tools in the hands of rituals and sacrifices, the latter having more splendour and power than the former, the people turned to Gods such as Viṣṇu and Śiva whose images they must have started making.

Though anthropomorphic description of the gods was found in the early vedas, no definite form was attributed to the particular gods. The iconographic texts must have originated after the custom of image worship had definitely been in vogue in India at this time in the later Vedic age. J. N. Benerjea has shown that the elements of *Śatarudriya* section of *Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā*, while referring to the names of several gods and goddesses, also describe the iconographic features of some of them.[18] Hence, the name Karaṭa Hastimukha of Gaṇeśa indicates the iconography of these deities. Similarly, the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* refers to the traits of some of the gods as the Vakratuṇḍa, Dantī (Gaṇeśa); Mahāsena Ṣaṇmukha (Kārttikeya) Svarṇa-pakṣa (Garuḍa) etc.[19] The *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad*[20] further elaborates the iconography of some of these gods who were according to Banerjea mostly folk gods, absorbed in the Vedic society. According to scholars as Banerjea and Tarapada Bhattacharya, the iconographic characteristics of the folk gods such as Yakṣas arose before those of the higher cult gods and goddesses.[21]

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Another important step in the development of image worship was the system of yoga in which an external object is employed to concentrate the mind upon in the act of meditation. *Dhāraṇā* is "the process of fixing the mind on some object well defined in space". This process is of two kinds in consequence of this defined space being internal or external. Hence, image worship, if not older than the yoga system, was certainly contemporaneous with it. T.A.G. Rao says that the yoga system was older than the time of the Buddha as the Buddha was initiated into its practice in the earlier stages of his search for truth. The Gāndhāra school of sculpture also shows him emaciated by austere practices.[22] Other scholars also believe that the yoga school of thought was certainly as old as the upaniṣads and was derived from the Indus Valley people.[23]

The *Gṛhya sūtras* clearly refer to image worship. They refer to the images of Śiva and Viṣṇu. Iconographic features of many gods must have been fixed in this period. Though they do not contain descriptions of iconographic traits of these gods, their iconography must have risen at this time. The *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra* refers to *daivataṁ* or image of gods; the *daivatas*, brāhmanas, cows and fathers mentioned in such a manner as to show that they were the most honoured among them.[24] Likewise, the *Āpastamba Gṛhyasūtra*[25] deals with the carrying out of the images like Īśāna, Mīdhuṣī and Jayanta by the householder and placing them in huts built for them. These became very popular in the post-*Gṛhya sūtra* periods and some of them became sectarian ones.[26]

Another reason why image worship received a fillip was that the sixth century B.C. ushered in an age of affluence. The emergence of town life, an affluent section of people, and kingdoms were responsible for the growth of various arts and crafts. The development of guilds provided a distinct training and tradition to the artists. Though their skill was used mainly in the construction of palaces (as Chandragupta's palace), gradually art began to be used as a vehicle for religious propagation by the rich patrons of art, the beginning of which can be seen from the time of Aśoka.[27]

The *Jātakas* point to the iconographic traits of the various popular gods. A *Jātaka* story[28] refers to a boy as comely as Brahmā, and T. Bhattacharya opines that this might indicate the beauty of the image of Brahmā of that time. The *Siri Kālakaṇṇi Jātaka*[29] describes a Goddess Kālakaṇṇi as wearing a blue dress and jewels and dark in colour.

Pāṇini used the term *pratikṛti* (*ive pratikṛtau*) meaning by it imitation or likeness of a person or a thing. In another sūtra under it, *jīvikārthe cāpaṇye*,[30] he refers to certain *pratikṛtis* which were *jīvikārtha* as well as *apaṇya*. On the authority of Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*, and *Kāśika* it is known that such images as were *jīvikārtha*, but not for sale, were actually the images of gods, highly venerated. The sūtra has been thus explained by *Kāśikā*: "That which is bought and sold is called *paṇya*; that which is not so dealt with is *apanya*. The rule applies to the images of gods which are made means of subsistence by a low order of Brahmaṇas, not by selling them but by exhibiting them from door to door".

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Explaining it, Patañjali says that the Mauryas had the images of gods for obtaining gold (*Mauryairhiraṇyārthibhiḥ arcā prakalpitā*).

The rise of Vaiṣṇavism and the idea of *avatāravāda* gave a fresh cause to the construction of images for worship. The idea of Īśvara himself coming down amidst the mortals as an avatāra to guide them to become perfect in their own nature, to become what they potentially are and living among them as a mortal, was in itself enough enocouragement to the development of images. They could evolve a definite iconography for the avatāras. The *Pāñcarātra* texts classified the five-fold manifestations of the Lord—*para, vyūha, vibhava, antaryāmī* and *arcā*. The last is the image of the Lord. The Lord condescends to come in the image for the devotee. This *arcā* form was an object of deep love for the Vaiṣṇavas. Before this, the images were also used for *ābhicārika* purposes where the images were used to do even harm to the enemy of the worshipper. But the *arcā* concept was full of pure love alone. The image was also used for the *pañca karma* mentioned by the *Pāñcarātra saṁhitās*. The *Jayākhya Saṁhitā* mentions—*abhigamana, upādāna, jiyā, abhyāya, yoga*. Hints of *upādāna* and *jiyā* are seen also in the *Gītā* where the lord says that He is pleased even if the devotee offers Him a leaf or a flower ("*Patraṁ Puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyaṁ...*") hinting that images must have been used at the time of the *Gītā* also.[31]

We get inscriptional evidence of the second century B.C., which point to the image worship at that period. The Besanagar inscription refers to the erection of a *garuḍadhvaja* in honour of Vāsudeva.[32] An early sculpture of Balarāma also comes from Mathurā which has been assigned to the second century B.C. on stylistic grounds.[33] The Ghoṣuṇḍi inscription of first century B.C. records the construction of a stone enclosure of the place of worship by a Bhāgavat[34] and the Morā well inscription of first century A.D. speaks of the 'images of the group of five divine hereos of the Vṛṣṇi family'.[35]

A few available texts of Hindu sculpture and painting may be placed in the third or fourth century A.D. But their authors clearly note down the existence of innumerable texts before them which formed the basis of their writings. Thus, the *Matsya Purāṇa*[36] list of 18 teachers on *Vāstuvidyā* contains the names of several authors who are also known to have composed works on sculpture and painting. The *Matsya Purāṇa* text on *Vāstuvidyā* appears to belong to the third or fourth century A.D. The chapters on iconography therein (chs. 258-263) appear to be earlier than those in *Bṛhat Saṁhita*, as they do not contain the names of Balarāma, Buddha and Kalki in the list of avatāras which are found in Varāhamihira's works.

The *Matsya Purāṇa* chapters, however, refer to the tāla measurement of images which need not be regarded as pointing to a later age, as Banerjea has done.[37]

Alongwith the *Matsya Purāṇā* the *Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharatamuni also supplies information about *Citravidyā* before the sixth century, the date of Varāhamihira's *Bṛhat Saṁhita*. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* may be dated about the end of third century A.D.[38]

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It shows Bharata's acquaintance with the symbolism of colour in representing gods as noted in the texts of iconography. As for instance, he states[39] that the image of Brahmā should be of yellow colour as creating *adbhuta rasa* in the mind of the spectators.

Various poses of gods as described in iconographical texts, and *tāla* and *aṅgula* measurements as mentioned in iconometrical texts were known to Bharata.[40] These injunctions show his debt to the *Śilpaśāstras* or the *āgamas*. Though not available early, śilpa texts except the *Agni Purāṇa*[41] describe Brahmā as bearded; bearded images of Brahmā of the third or fourth century A.D. are found in the Mathura Museum.[42] Such bearded Brahmā figures may thus have originated in *śilpa* texts available to Bharata (though now lost) and mentioned by him in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*[43] that divine beings (*divya Puruṣāh*) and kings should be shown as bearded. The *Nāṭyaśāstra*, thus, may prove the existence of technical literature on sculpture and painting before its time, i.e. before the third or sixth century A.D.

The idea of image worship gained more popularity in course of time later with the growth of the tantras also which evolved a whole pattern of worship in perfect union with the idea of bhakti. God has to be brought down in the image which is made in accordance with the dhyāna mantras for that particular image. Then the mantras of *pratiṣṭhā* are followed by those of *adhivāsana* (bringing of the god nearer) and *Prāṇa Pratiṣṭhā* (infusing of life).[44] The eyes of the deity are opened by *nayanonmīlana* rites.

Many of the Śākta Tāntric works may be placed in the sixth or seventh century A.D. if not in earlier periods. The *Kubjikā Tantra* (Ms. available of seventh century), the *Brahmayāmala*, and the *Piṅgalamatam* appear to be works of this class and contain valuable texts on the *Pratimālakṣaṇa*. It may be recalled that Banerjea in his Bengali work (*Pañcopāsanā*) has proved conclusively that Tāntric religion existed in the fifth century A.D., (Kumāragupta's time) and it is probable that several Tāntric texts arose in that period or perhaps earlier.

The iconography of the Tāntric goddesses might have originated in the pre-Christian era, since some scholars trace the earliest reference to one of the *Mātrikās* in the worship of Brahmāṇī in the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya.

Regarding the compilations of *Vāstu* texts made in the eleventh century in North India, the most significant is that of Bhoja, the *Samarāṅgaṇa Sūtradhāra*. The *Aparājitapṛcchā* attributed to Viśvakarmā is another such compilation of *Vāstuśastra*. The *Haribhaktivilāsa* of Gopālabhaṭṭa was compiled in the fifteenth century. An important Tāntric text of the southern school was the *Dīpta Tantra*. The *Īśāna Śivagurudevapaddhati* of this school is a valuable work for studying iconography and was complied in the eleventh century.

This available south Indian works of Viśvakarmā, Kaśyapa and Atri are not earlier than ninth/tenth centuries. Banerjea correctly places the *Vaikhānasa Āgama*

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after the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātram*.[45] Another important compilation of *Śilpaśāstra* is the *Abhilaṣitārtha-ciñtāmaṇi* or *Mānasollasa* of king Someśvara of the Deccan of the twelfth century. The famous work *Śilparatnaṁ* was composed in the sixteenth century. *Kāśyapaśilpa, Śukranītisāra* and *Nārada śilpa* are further south Indian texts of a later date. This tradition of *śilpa* works is apparently contemporaneus with the growth of the temple architecture and sculpture on the one hand and the *āgamic* religion on the other.

Factors taken into consideration in making images of gods and the growth of iconography

We have already seen that the image was to be made in accordance with the *dhyāna-mantra*. The craftsman had to go through the whole process of self-purification and worship, mental visualization and identification of consciousness with the form evoked and only then translate the form into stone or metal.[46] Hence, even the image making was not isolated from intense contemplation which naturally involves bhakti.

These *dhyāna-mantras* became the prescriptions by which the craftman worked and as such they were commonly included in the *Śilpa Śāstra*, the technical literature of craftsmanship. These texts provide all the iconography for us.

Hence, Śukrācārya says, "One should set up in temples the images of angels who are the objects of his devotion, by mental vision of their attributes; it is for the full achievements of this yoga vision that the proper lineaments of image are prescribed; therefore the mortal imager should resort to trance vision, for thus and not otherwise and surely not by direct perception is the end to be attained".[47]

The *Śilpa Śāstra* prescribed certain ideal proportions proper to various deities. The craftsman had to keep them in mind while making the images. Otherwise, a beautiful image and a fruitful one was that which conformed to the *dhyāna-mantra* and all the proportions prescribed for it.[48] These conventional features endowed the image with a sanctity, differentiating it decisively from a mere image of ordinary earthly beauty. It helped to focus the mind of the artist and worshipper on the image as an image of a deity.

In certain cases should the artist's image not conform to the prescribed texts and certain faults are accidentally incurred, the intensity of the feeling of the worshipper can be powerful enough to override those shortcomings. According to *Śukranītsāra* "The lineaments (*lakṣaṇa*) of images are known (*smṛta*) from the nature (*bhāva*) of the worshipped and the worshipper (*sevyasevaka*). By the power of the intention (*tapas*) of the officiant (*arcaka*), whose heart is ever set upon the Lord, the faults of the image immediately pass away".[49] He quotes Gopalabhaṭṭa (from an unknown source) who reconciles the spiritual activity of the worshipper with the traditional iconography—"Though it is the devotion (bhakti) of the devotee that causes the manifestation of the image of the Blessed one (*Bhagavat*) in this matter (of iconography), the procedures of the sages should be followed".[50]

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Hence, it is obvious that every limb of the main image, all accompaniments like the vāhana or attendants, the implements in the hands, the pedestal and the halo as well as the colour, size and proportion of the different parts are significant and full of underlying mystic symbolism. They were the outward form of the mantras. Besides this, the images were not made "true to nature", a slavish copy of nature robs the image of its aesthetic value as well as it fails to evoke adequate religious response in the perceiver. An ideal craftsman would never cast the image of a goddess in the exact moulds of a mortal woman. The representations of gods are a means to a spiritual end, not so those which are only likenesses of human individuals. This also explains the origin of multi-faced and multi-handed icons. Western scholars like Macdonell had said that this practice arose out of the necessity of the sculptors to distinguish the image of one deity from the other. But in the light of the above argument we know now that one of the reasons for this practice must have been to show the divine character. According to Tarapada Bhattacharya, some unusual elements were perhaps necessary to make the images of gods free from their human sensuous appeal, especially in case of female deities with high breasts and big hips. The *Brahmayāmala Tantra* classifies the image into *divyādhika*, *divya* and *divyādivya*. Macdonell's theory is refuted by other arguments also—(a) Even the Vedic mantras described the gods anthropomorphically and sometimes attributed many hands to them—Agni had four horns, three legs etc.[51] (b) Multi-headed images have been discovered even among the remains of Indus Valley culture.[52] (c) Two hands were possessed by many gods and goddesses even when there were no demarcating features in the vāhanas e.g. the images of Gaurī and Lakṣmī. Many times the implements in their hands distinguished such images from one another. (d) Four handed images are found very early in history—even in the time of Huviṣka. This shows their origin in an early period.

Hence we see that the practice of making many handed images was also to endow them with a sanctity—making them fit objects of bhakti.

Temples and bhakti

The nature of the Godhead and the mode of approach to the deity are intimately connected with the existence of a shrine or its absence. Shrines are largely conditioned by the nature of approach to the deity, or in other words, by the kind of worship to be offered. Hence Indus Valley people must be having some sort of a place to keep their images. Vedic worship did not need a temple as it was mostly a sacrificial religion. The popular folk gods which must have existed beside the high gods must be having some sort of structures as their houses. The *Śānkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra* refers to a *prāsāda* with walls around the roof and windows. The priest was to get upon the *prāsāda* and offer grains etc. to fire from there. This shows that though it could not be called a temple but was a mansion used for religious purposes. The epics refer to temples as merely "houses of Gods" (*devāyatana*). Inscriptional evidence of some construction at the place of worship

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of the first century B.C. is found e.g. at Ghoṣundi Inscription, which records the construction of a *pūjā-śilā-prākāra* (stone enclosure) for a place of worship.[53] The Hāthīgumphā cave inscription of King Khāravela informs us that the king repaired all temples belonging to the different sects in the land, that some of these structures had their courts (*prākāra*) and their towers (*gopura*) damaged by storm, and that he built new temples, *śikharas* provided with strong and beautiful entrance arcades (*gopura*).[54] This inscription is ascribed to first century B.C. by scholars. Hence we get ample evidence that by the first century B.C., temples were made which could be the proto-types of the later temples. Later, the temples were regarded not only as abodes of gods but had developed a deep symbolic significance which was in keeping with the idea of bhakti. Like the Buddhist stūpa, the Hindu temple was also regarded as a sacrificial microcosm of the world. Its plinth was regarded as the altar, its superstructure the mythical world mountain Meru. Its cella was a cave in which the image of the deity was hidden like the Brahmā in and beyond the material world.[55] This concept was elaborated before the seventh-eighth century. The temple was conceived as the visible outer casement of the invisible deity, a visible image of which is installed in it as an emblem of the invisible spirit which pervades all nature.[56] Hence the temple was regarded not merely as a place of devotion, but also an object of devotion like the image. The worship of a temple is performed by an act of going round it called circumambulation (*pradakṣiṇā*). To the devotees, the temple was not a mere building, a pile of mere brick or stone but was the visible representation of the deity itself. Going round this visible deity is still performed with adequate reverence with the recitation of mantras. This is necessary to worship the image, the door keeper and the door.

Another theological and symbolic interpretation of the temple is found in the *Agni Purāṇa*. In this, a worshipper of Śiva is enjoined to identify the various parts of the temple with several things related to Śiva. Hence he should contemplate the *pītha* to be the *Brahmāṇḍa*, the *Jañghā* as *Pañcabhūtas*, *Mañjari* and *Vedikā as Vidyā* etc. *Kaṇṭha-maya* with Rudra, *Āmalasāra* as *Vidyā*, *Kalaśa* as Īśvara with *Bindu* and *Vidyeśvara* decorated with matted locks, Sūla as half moon and three Śaktis, *Daṇḍa* as *nāda*, *Dhvaja* as *Kuṇḍalī Śakti*.[57]

Function of the Purāṇas

The Purāṇas gave a fresh impetus to the development of a plastic art which was a direct mode of communicating to the people the religious myths, and stories and beliefs adumbrated in the Purāṇas. The Purāṇas themselves were written to convey even to the common people the religious traditions and myths and beliefs. Their popularity lay in the fact that they had built a link between the old hieratic traditions and the current popular and folk traditions. They evolved a personal and anthropomorphic notion of gods, generalized the concept of incarnation to include incarnation in any form, emphasized the personal and domestic ritual symbolizing the veneration of a person, stressed on japa and dhyāna alongwith the emphasis on the

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use of image and temples. The influence of all these factors was felt greatly on the plastic arts, and the function of the Purāṇas of communicating to the people these ideas was performed by the plastic arts. This in itself tended to aid the development of cults.

Some Purāṇas as *Matsya* and *Agni* discussed in detail the rules regarding iconography.[58] We have already discussed the essential rules regarding iconography found in these texts. We might see how art served as a documentary of bhakti cults.

Art as a documentary of bhakti cults

We have seen in the previous chapters[59] that by the time of the *Taittīriya Araṇyaka*, Nārāyaṇa, Vāsudeva and Viṣṇu were identified with one another. Even in the *Mahābhārata* the identification of Nārāyaṇa and Vāsudeva with Viṣṇu is found. Viṣṇu who had emerged as a great god in the late Vedic age was now worshipped in all his splendour. This is corroborated by the plastic art in Mathura, which must have been the centre of Viṣṇu worship from the fifth century B.C. Many archaeological proofs in the form of Vaiṣṇava inscriptions and images are found which belong to the first century B.C. So also, Viṣṇu images are found of the Kuṣāṇa period. Most of them have *mukuṭa* on the head and other ornaments on the body and wear a dhoti and a scarf. The right hand is in the position of *Abhayamudrā*, the left akimbo and holding an *amṛtaghaṭa*, the two extra hands holding a mace and cakra respectively. This shows a great development in the iconography of Viṣṇu. V. S. Agrawal observes that if the two extra hands are removed the figure becomes very much like that of Maitreya and has commented that both these figures appears to have been modelled in accordance with the same iconography.[60]

With the development of the *pāñcarātra-Bhāgavata* cult there was an elaboration in the pantheon. From various items of evidence it becomes clear that by this time the Bhāgavatas had started building temples enshrining their deities. The occurrence of the term '*Śailadevagṛha*'[61] in the Morā Inscription is significant and even Patañjali, placed in the second century B.C. speaks of the '*prāsādas*' of Rāma Keśava '*Prāsāde dhanapatirāmakesavānām*'.[62] The Nārāyaṇa-Vāṭaka of Ghoṣundi provides an archaeological testimony.[63] We know that when Kṛṣṇa was declared as an incarnation, the followers of other Vṛṣṇi heroes must have evolved the doctrine of *vyūhas* according to which they were regarded as the emanations of the Lord (the tradition of hero worship was prevalent since ancient times and the worship of Vṛṣṇi heroes in Mathura was in this tradition). Early images of Balarāma and Sāmba belonging to the first century B.C. are found. A very earlier image of Balarāma is found which is now preserved in the Lucknow Museum and assigned to the second century B.C. on stylistic grounds.[64] The Balarāma figure is similar to the Yakṣa figures. It holds a pestle in his right hand and a serpent hood is represented over his head. It is clear that all the iconographic features of Balarāma had been determined very much in the 'Śuṅga period'. The early images of Sāmba

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are based on the model of Sūrya images. He is shown with a drinking cup and a staff. J.N. Banerjea thinks that the fragmentary capitals with the figures of Garuda *tala* and *mākara* at Besanagar and Pawaya point to the existence of *dhvaja* and shrines of Vāsudeva, Saṁkaraṣaṇa and Pradyumna.[65] Torsos from the Morā shrine of the Vṛṣṇi heroes are also found. They are modelled on the style of the Yakṣa statuettes, but whereas the Yakṣa statues are in a grandiose style of colossal size, the images of Vṛṣṇi heroes are comparatively smaller.[66]

Looking at the development of the plastic art we come to the conclusion that the worship of the Vṛṣṇi heroes was very popular in the early centuries of the Christan era.

But the emanatory theory of the *Vyūhas* based on the philosophical Sānkhyan principles could not charm the people for a great length of time. By the time of the Gupta age the concept of avatāra had become more popular.[67] Nevertheless the avatāras had not become centres of separate cults. Viṣṇu in his *Para* form was the central object of devotion. This explains why the images of Kṛṣṇa and Rāma till very late are more illustrative reliefs than static cult images. Excepting the evolution in the stylistic features there are no iconographic emblems particularly attributed to them. This fact is rather corroborated by the literary evidence. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* mostly Viṣṇu's glory is sung whereas in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (which is attributed to eighth-ninth centuries i.e. later than the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*) Kṛṣṇa becomes as important. In the context of the present discussion the importance of the Gupta age lies primarily in the expanded pantheon and the new iconographic features associated with the phenomenon of a very wide geographical range that was under its sway. By this time various myths had cropped up which enriched the scope of the sculptor to represent the same deity in various forms. Thus, we find Viṣṇu in such forms a Trivikrama, Nṛsiṁha, Varāha, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa and Śeṣaśāyin.

Viṣṇu in his pure form is depicted in the form of *śesa nārāyaṇa* in many places. All types of this image are found—*yoga*, *bhoga*, *yoga-śayana* and *bhoga-śayana*. Also *vīra śayana mūrti* and *ābhicārika mūrti* are found. Most of them are complete with the consorts of Viṣṇu—Lakṣmī and Bhūmidevi—Mārkaṇḍeya, Bhṛgu, Brahmā and Śiva, Āyudha-Puruṣas, Āśvin, Tumburu, Nārada—more or less the whole divine family. An excellent example of *bhoga śayana mūrti* is found in the Deogarh temple of the fifth century A.D.[68] Other examples of *śeṣa nārāyaṇa* can be seen in the Udaigiri cave No. 14, and at the Rājīva Locana Temple at Rajim (sixth century A.D.). The image of *śeṣa śāyī* from Mathura of seventh-eighth century shows *Navagrahas* also. The divine family around Viṣṇu kept on increasing with time as the cult grew. Though Lakṣmī was associated with Viṣṇu from an early period she is hardly seen with him in the earlier images. Among some of the famous Lakṣmī-Viṣṇu images are those in Pārśvanātha and Lakṣmaṇa temple in Khajurāho.

We have said before that Kṛṣṇāvatāra was very popular in the Gupta period, but the cult images of Kṛṣṇa appear very late. Most of them are in the form of

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illustrative reliefs. These also show that the childhood feats of Kṛṣṇa were very popular in the Gupta age. There was a tendency to show him as a child with *Vyāghra-nakha* and *Kākapakṣa* style of hair falling on shoulders in the shape of crows feathers. Though he is recognized as an incarnation of Viṣṇu, he is depicted as the most human of all incarnations. Several incidents of his life story are variously portrayed on the panels of the Daśāvatāra temple at Deogarh.[69] Lakṣmaṇa temple at Sirpur[70] (ca. seventh century A.D.) panels of Pahārpur[71] temple (ca. seventh-eighth century A.D.) and Lakṣmaṇa temple at Khajurāho[72] (ca. tenth-twelfth century A.D.). In the first three examples there is hardly any attempt to show Kṛṣṇa in any other age group but in the Lakṣmaṇa temple he is shown as an infant in his very early age and in later incidents as more mature and advancing towards the teens. The stories of his childhood depicted on the temples are found in the purāṇas also. Popular themes like Kṛṣṇa after birth being fondled by Vasudeva, crossing the river, Nanda Yaśodā with Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, Pūtanā-vadha, stealing of butter, Yamalārjuna bhanga, Govardhana dhāraṇa etc. are all portrayed by the artists. These helped a lot in the formation of the later cult of Bālagopāla by the Vallabhites. Dalliance with *gopīs* is shown much after the Gupta Age.

As regards the Rāmāvatāra though it had also a deep impact on people, we do not see cult images of Rāma—as described in the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* and *Agni Purāṇa*—in the early centuries of the Christian era and no shrine of Rāma comes to light before the medieval period. Scenes from Rāma's life are profusely carved on the walls of early temples e.g. the transformation of Ahalyā (Deogarh). Rāma-Lakṣmaṇa-Sītā in exile (Deogarh), Rāma's visit to Atri-Āśrama (Deogarh).[73] Some of the dhyānas of Rāma are also portrayed in the temples e.g. the dhyāna of Rāma in *Rāmarcana candrikā*—Rāma is adorned by sages and *grahas* sealed in the palace in Ayodhyā etc. All these features must have paved way for the emergence of a separate cult for Rāma later in the medieval period.

It is interesting to note that though Rāma and Kṛṣṇa who had separate cults later do not seem to have any in the Gupta age despite their great popularity, yet other incarnations like Varāha, Trivikrama and Nṛsiṁha seem to be more popular as regards some sort of cult worship.

Varāha worship was very common. Individual temples dedicated to Varāha are noticed in some inscription[74] and copper plate inscription of Budhagupta from Damodarpur in Bengal which refers to *Śveta* Varāha temple somewhere in Nepal.[75] A shrine of Varāha still exists in Deogarh. The Varāha worship was prevalent before the Gupta Age. A unique four-handed image of Varāha[76] is found belonging to the Kuṣāṇa age. Earth Goddess is seen on his shoulder, Śrīvatsa mark is on his chest. This is an inscribed image preserved in the Mathura Museum. To his right is a *gandharva*, to the left a devotee in *añjali mudrā*, on the floor is Hiraṇyākṣa.

The image of Varāha of the Gupta age are two-handed, without any of the Vaiṣṇava *āyudhas* in their hands. In the late Gupta period the Varāha images have four hands with emblems of Viṣṇu.

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The legend of Nṛsiṁha was also extremely popular since very ancient times. His invocation is found in the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* (tenth Prapathaka) and in the *Mahābhārata* where Nṛsiṁha is shown as the incarnation of Viṣṇu. But the first complete exposition of the myth is found in the *Harivaṁśa* the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. Hence his worship must have become common by that time. This is corroborated by several representations. He is shown to have a lion's face and human body seated on a high pedestal in *lalitāsana* pose on a seal found at Basarh which belongs to the early Gupta period. Another image of Nṛsiṁha is found on a Candraśālā at Deogarh[77] on a lotus in *ardhaparyaṅkāsana*, four-handed with Viṣṇu emblems, fierce flames as his halo and a devotee to the left in *añjali mudrā*. Images of Nṛsiṁha vary greatly from an iconographic point of view. In the post-Gupta period he is shown as killing Hiraṇkaśipu. Later this icon was influenced by Tāntrism and he was shown as a cult deity rather than merely an incarnation. His female counterpart is also shown.

Besides the worship of incarnations and pure forms of Viṣṇu, a tendency of synthesizing under the principal forms of Viṣṇu some of his incarnations and *Vyūhas* can also be seen by looking at the Vaikuṇṭha *Caturmūrti*. In the *brāhmaṇas* and upaniṣads Indra has the epithet Vaikuṇṭha. In the *Mahābhārata* Hari takes the form of Vaikuṇṭha. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* Hari is born as Vaikuṇṭha. The four faces of Vaikuṇṭha depicted were interpreted differently and sometimes they differed from one another also. According to *Rūpamaṇḍana*[78] Vaikuṇṭha has the faces of Puruṣa, Nṛsiṁha, Varāha and a woman. A three-headed Vaikuṇṭha image of sixth century A.D. shows human, boar and lion figures. In a recent work[79] by Kalpanā Desai it is argued that this form became the centre of an important cult and probably originated in Kashmir.

As Vaikuṇṭha mūrti shows the effort of synthesizing the various avatāras of Viṣṇu, similarly images of Harihara show the tendency to synthesize the Vaiṣṇava and the Śaiva cults and also Saura cult and sometimes Brahmā also. The composite form of Śiva and Viṣṇu is known as early as *Mahābhārata*.[80] The earliest image of Harihara is found belonging to the Kuṣāṇa period from Girdharpur Tila near Mathura. The upper portion is divided into *jaṭā* and *mukuṭa*. Sometimes Viṣṇu is joined with Sūrya also. Later on an attempt was made to synthesize the Hindu trinity into one. The deity was known as Harihara Pitāmaha. It has four faces, six hands, holding the rosary, trident and mace in the right hands and the *Kamaṇḍalu*, *khaṭvāṅga* and the dice in the left hands. Sūrya is blended with Trimūrti combining all the sects except the Śākta.

The development of bhakti in Buddhism can be traced very remarkably in the Buddhist sculpture. The Buddhist *Jātaka* stories and the life of Buddha are depicted on stone from very early times which was one of the reason for the spread of the cult far and wide. In the Śuṅga-Kāṇva age the Bharhut and Sānchi Stūpas were built. In these the presence of Buddha is shown by symbols[81]—as Dharmacakra,

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Bodhi tree, Caraṇa-pādukā etc., but yet all the carved work breathes the spirit of reverence and devotion, e.g., the four events in Buddha's life, *jāti, sambodhi, dharmacakrapravartana* and *Mahaparinirvāṇa.* The representation of *Jāti* takes the form of a lotus, or Māyādevī, *Sambodhi* by a throne under a pipal tree, *Dharmacakraparavartana* by the symbol of wheel sometime on throne or flanked by two deers. *Mahāparinirvāṇa* by a stupa attended by worshippers. Together with the *Jātaka* story depiction the whole life of Buddha is related in stone.

In Amarāvatī the change in the mode of worship from symbols to Buddha figure can be traced easily. V. S. Agrawal opines that the Amarāvatī sculptures show an evolution of style and a period of five centuries.[82] In the early or archaic period (200 B.C.) the presence of Buddha is indicated by symbols. In the second phase (A.D. 100) figures of Buddha in human form are shown only at a few places. In the (third century A.D.) Buddha is shown to be worshipped in human form mostly.[83]

The Amarāvatī stūpa shows a prolific detailed depiction of scenes from Buddha's life. In the bas-reliefs of the first period are found such scenes as the conversion of the Jaṭilas, distribution of the relics of the Buddha, the great renunciation, adoration of the enlightened Buddha, elephants adoring the stūpa, worship of Buddhapāda.

To the second period belongs the sculptural portrayal of scenes as departure of Siddhārtha, adoration of the enlightened Buddha, Buddha's preaching, turning of the wheel of law, Buddha's enlightenment symbolized by the Bodhi tree, worship of the stūpa, Buddha preaching to Nāga, birth of Māyā.

The third period exhibits in sculpture, scenes such as departure from the palace, adoration of the enlightened Buddha, *cintāmaha* or festival of Buddha's crest taken to heaven by Devas, *stūpa-pūjā*, conversion of the Bhaddavaggiya youths; *avakrānti* or descent of Buddha as white elephant, peacock preaching the law, Buddha's preaching in the *trayastriṁśa* heaven, Buddha's miracle of fire, elephants adoring the Bodhitree, prominent scenes from Buddha's life—birth of Rāhula, departure, first sermon, Yaśodharā, Śuddhodana despatching a messenger, Buddha visiting Kapilavastu.

To the fourth period also belong various scenes from Buddha's life—assault of Māra, enlightenment, Rāmagrāma stūpa guarded by serpent kings, conversion of Nanda, Rāhula's *uttarādhikāra*, dream of Māyā and its interpretations.

In the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa stūpa the events of Buddha's life are depicted elaborately. The Bodhisattvas are also shown. We know that the Lokottravāda Mahāsāṁghika sect had given rise to the concept of the Bodhisattvas and conceived of the Buddha docetically. These docetic tendencies reached their full flowering in the Mahāyāna work "*Saddharma Puṇḍarīka*" which is assigned by scholars to first century A.D. (some scholars—second century A.D.).[83] Hence in the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa stūpas we see the Bodhisattvas in Tuṣita heaven, descent of Bodhisattva, etc.

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These Bodhisattvas also acted as the dispensers of worldly blessings and substituted to a great extent, the existence of other gods for this purpose in Buddhism.

This was the reason for their great popularity and the plastic art took full advantage of this fact.

The *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka* had associated various miracles with the Buddha. This God-like character is seen in the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa sculptures of Buddha and Nanda of a visit to Heaven.

By the beginning of the Christian era Buddha came to be represented in the form of images. The ideas behind this great step brought about a revolution in image making. The Mahayana doctrine following upon earlier tendencies had brought about a new concept of the Buddha. He was seen as the absolute world principle, a personification of highest truth, wisdom and goodness. In connection with this outlook there developed a desire to behold and revere this sacred person. He was considered as the merciful redeemer of the world. The early Mahāyāṇic texts[84] said that the historical Śākyamuni is the created body of a shadow created to follow the ways of the world (Lokānuvartana) so that the people might be convinced that the Buddhahood is not an impossibility. This concept was the same as that of Mahāsaṁghikas who had first said that Śākyamuni is only a created body (*nirmāṇa kāya*) while the real Buddha is *lokottara* or transcendental.[85] Already these images had before them a tradition of making Bhāgavata heroes.

This development in Buddhology led to the natural desire to have a concrete form of the Master as an object of veneration. This belief in a higher reality of Buddha and the existing tendencies in plastic art of other sects created an outlet for the expression of devotion in the form of images in Buddhism. Image-making necessarily presupposes the existence, rather popular prevalence, of the idea of bhakti. Ms. Leeuew has said: "When Coomaraswamy pleaded for the idea that Mathura had created the Buddha-image on its own initiative, he brought forward *inter alia* then the bhakti-cult, which in those centuries became very prominent, demanded as it were a concrete image of the Master. Konow completely joined in with this".[86] V.S. Agrawal[87] has also laid stress on the bhakti element as a necessary pre-requisite for the image-worship. He points to its existence at Mathura but its absence at Gāndhāra.

This step was taken at two places Gāndhāra and Mathura. Scholars have debated for many years as to where the image of Buddha came first into existence Grünwedel[88] and A. Foucher[89] pleaded that the Buddha-image goes back to the Apollo figure. The theory was revived by Tarn,[90] who contended that the image of Buddha came into existence in Gāndhāra in the beginning of the first century B.C., at the latest and consequently existed for almost two centuries already when the Mathura artists started to make the images of the Master. Coomraswamy[91] gave this credit to the Mathura artists and contended that the Buddha images had originated from the Yakṣa type and pointed to the element of bhakti as the psychological

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background for image-making as such. Lohuizen-De Leeuew[92] had studied the whole problem in great detail and presenting some archaeological data concludes that the Buddha image came to be made at Mathura at least half a century, if not a whole century, earlier than at Gāndhāra. Agrawal[93] too has held Mathura as the place of origin of the Buddha-image. Now it is generally concluded that Mathura was ahead by a few decades and the issue has lost much of its significance in view of the small difference in time involved. According to Coomaraswamy the iconography of early images in Mathura is based on the ideal of yogi and the ideal of cakravarti and the images of Bodhisattvas were modelled on the Yakṣa types.[94] Leeuew agrees with Coomaraswamy but says that this is only partly true of the seated type. No seated Yakṣa image has been found. In Bharhut art one finds representations of Brahmin hermits and ascetics sitting cross-legged but the posture is shown in a clumsy way, whereas the oldest Buddha images, for example, that of Katra, presume a long line of development. She points to the fact that in Jainism images were used even in the middle of the first century B.C., and she would like to date some figures of Buddha found from Mathura to date to the same period as the Jaina *avāgapaṭṭas*. According to her, both in Jainism and Buddhism, there had been a transition period in which the Buddha and the Jina figures appeared side by side with the symbols. The images in the Gāndhāra region were influenced by Hellenistic styles.

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1. Coomaraswamy, *The Transformation of Nature in Art*, p. 61; *Figures of Speech* or *Figures of Thought*, pp. 153-157.
2. Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*. vol. II, p. 28.
3. A psychological understanding of Indian image-worship would make it very clear that the image is never taken in the sense of a fetish. In the words of Guenon: "Dan l'iende, en particular, une image symbolique representant l'un ou l'autre des 'attributs divins', et qui est appelee *pratika*, n'est point une 'idee' car ella n'a jamas ete prise pour autre chose que ce qu'elle est reellement un support de meditation et en moyen auxilaire de realization", cf. Guenon, R., *Introduction a L'etude des doctrines hindoues*, p. 209.
4. Coomaraswamy, *The Transformation of Nature in Art*, p. 157.
5. *Gītā*, VII, 22.
6. Yāska, *Niruktam*, VII, 2.
7. Cf. Dr. G. C. Pande, *Bauddha Dharma ke Vikās kā Itihāsa*, p. 203.
8. V. S. Agrawal, *Indian Art*, p. 34.

8A. Marshall, *Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus Civilization*, vol. I, p. 70.

9. "*Mahānagni Mahānagnam dravantam anudhāvati*," *Atharvaveda*, 20, 136, 11.
10. Regarding the question of the prevalence of image-worship during the Vedic period, the conlusion of Max Müller was negative. Wilson and Macdonell too came to the conclusion that the Indians of the early Vedic period did not

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make images of their gods. However, considering such common appellation of the gods as '*divo naras*' (i.e., 'men of the sky') and '*nṛpeśas*' (i.e. having the form of man') and some other passages of the *Ṛgveda*, Bollenson concluded that images played a very important part in the religious practice of the early Vedic Indo-Aryans. S. V. Venkatesvara has adduced more textual evidence in support of this thesis, cf. S. V. Venkatesvara, *JRAS*, 1916, 1917 and 1918; Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, pp. 17-18; *JRAS*, 1909, p. 317.

11. G. C. Pande, *Bauddha Dharma ke Vikās kā Itihāsa*, p. 204.
12. Tārāpada Bhattacharya, *The Canons of Indian Art*, pp. 414-15.
13. Max Müller. *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. I, p. 38.
14. Bollenson, *JGOS*, XXII, pp. 587ff; See also, J. N. Banerjea, *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, pp. 44-49.
15. T. A. G. Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, vol. I, Pt. I, p. 5.
16. J. N. Banerjea, op. cit., pp. 62-65.
17. *Agni Purāṇa*, Ch. 56; *Hayaśīrṣa Pāñcarātra*, Vilas 18, Quoted from Tārāpada Bhattacharya, *The Canons of Indian Art*, p. 415.
18. J. N. Banerjea, *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 575ff.
19. *Mahānārāyanopaniṣad*, IV, I, 18.
20. ibid.
21. J. N. Banerjea, *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 343.
22. Cf. Zimmer, *The Art of Indian Asia*, vol. II, plates, Pl. No. 65.
23. Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya, *The Evolution of the Theistic Sects in Ancient India*, p. 17.
24. *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra*, III, 14, 8.
25. *Āpastamba Gṛhyasūtra*, VII, 20, 3.
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83A. Cf. Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature*. vol. II, p. 304.

84. Cf. *Mahāvastu*.
85. Of course this philosophy kept on developing till the time of Asanga. In its final stage the shadowy image corresponded to *sambhogakāya* and the created Buddha-*nirmānakāya*; *dharmakāya* was the highest state of Buddha which corresponded to Brahman which was to be realized directly by intuition and was beyond all determinations. The *sambbogakāya* corresponded to Īśvara and *nirmāṇakāya* to avatāras. For details see Chapter—Bhakti in Buddhism.
86. Louhizen-De Leeuew, *The Scythian Period*, pp. 169-70.
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